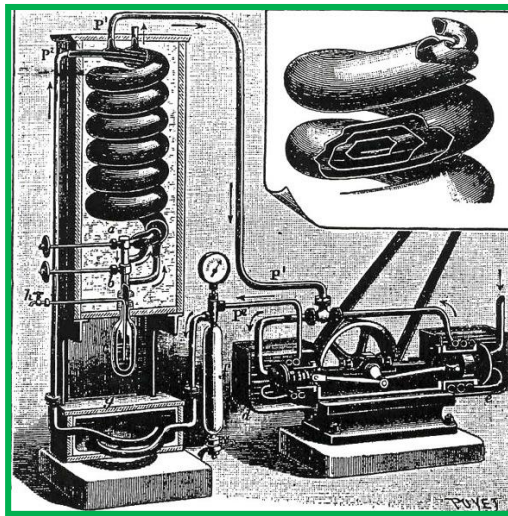


Introduction to the cryogenics for superconducting systems

Ph Brédy
CEA - Paris Saclay

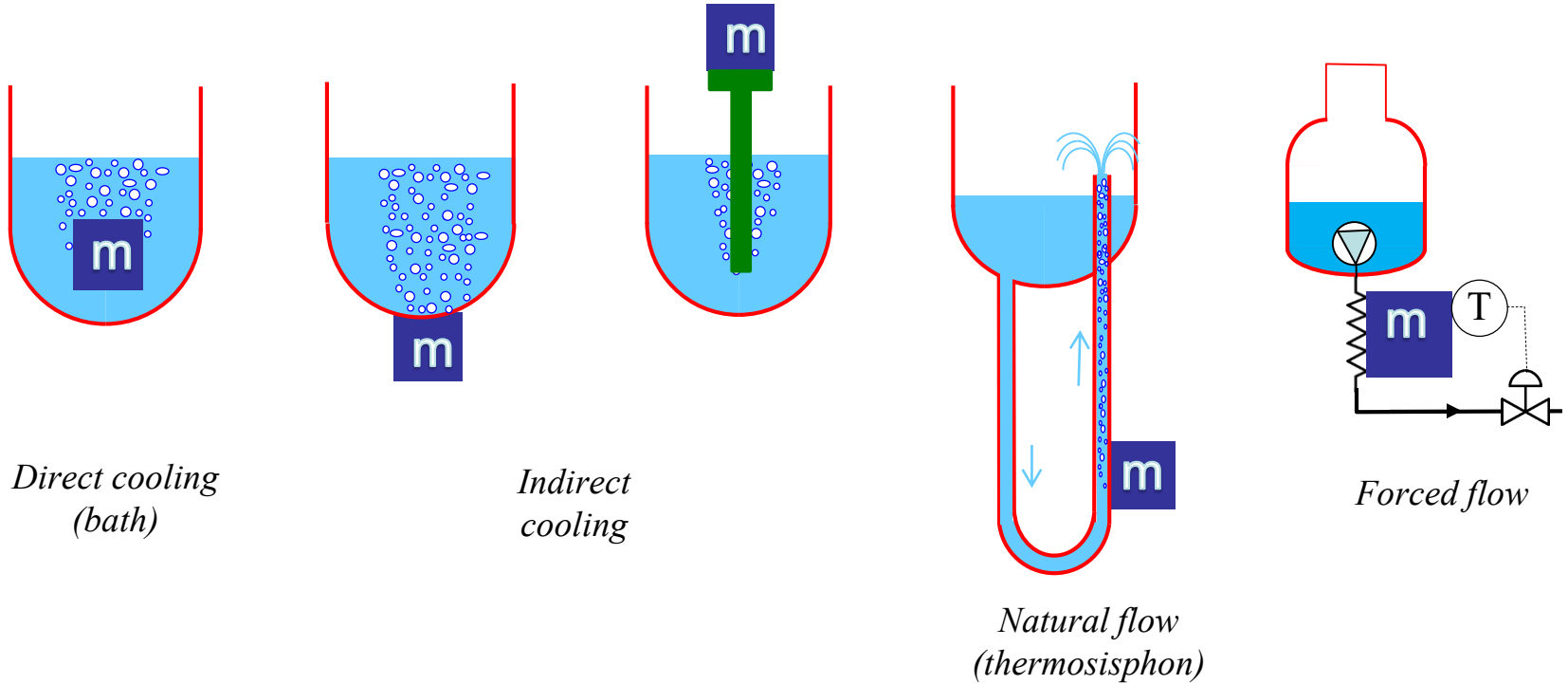


philippe.bredy@cea.fr

- **Quick history of gas refrigeration and basic concepts of helium machines. Various cycles :**
 - **Vapor compression cycle**
 - **Linde's cycle**
 - **Brayton's cycle**
 - **Claude' cycle**
- **Current general configuration**
- **Main components of helium refrigerators**
 - **Compressor**
 - **Heat exchangers**
 - **Turbo-expanders**
- **Integration in superconducting magnet cooling. Example.**
- **Efficiency**

Basic reminders

Still today, superconducting state requires low temperature and consequently use of cryogenic fluids



- LHe for many applications with Low Temperature Sc (majority)
- LH₂ and LN₂ when High Temperature Superconductors (still rare)


Basic reminders

2 ways to obtain these cryogenic fluids

- **buy cryogenic fluid** and use it for cooling (latent heat of vaporization or by heat capacity)

- Initial low investment
- Supplier dependence
- High cost during exploitation



 : helium gas is derived from extraction of fossil fuels and now considered as a strategic matter

Fluid	He ⁴	H ₂	Ne	N ₂	Ar	O ₂
Boiling temperature at Patm in K	4,2	20,4	27,1	77,3	87,3	90,2
Latent heat of vaporization in J.g ⁻¹	21	452	86	199	157	213
Vaporization rate(*) in W.h.l ⁻¹	0,7	9,0	29,0	45	61	68
Approximative cost for one liter in €/liter (for large delivered quantity)	40 €/liter			0,12	> 15	

(*) : number of watts needed to vaporize one liter of liquid in 1 hour

Basic reminders

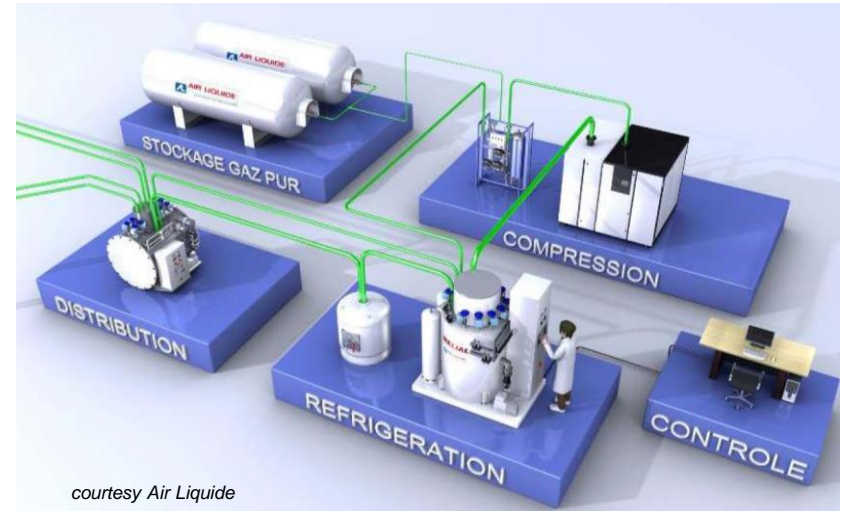
- Produce the cryogenic fluid locally and **install an autonomous refrigeration equipment** (refrigerator, liquefier) able to produce and/or to liquefy a fluid at low temperature

High cost initial investment

Low independence from supplier

Flexibility and adaptability

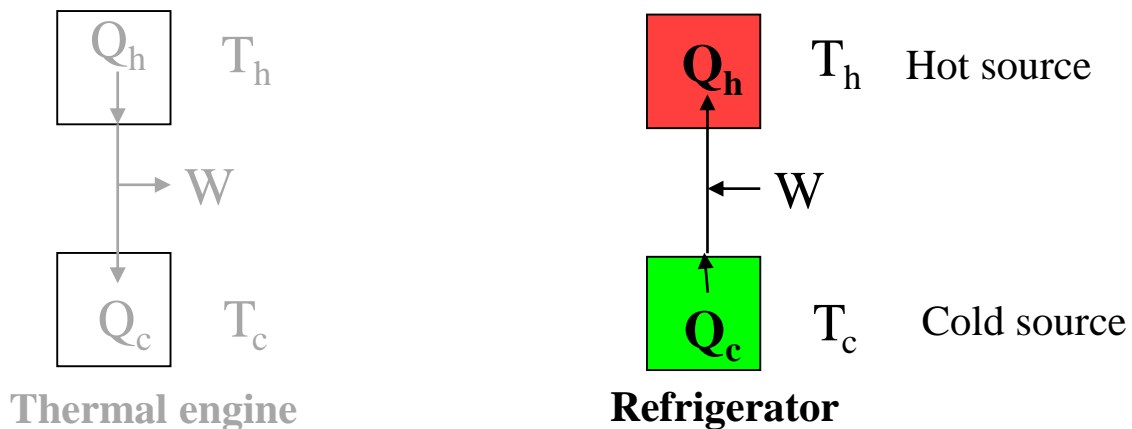
Sustainable for exploitation



Commonly, testing or operating large superconducting magnet needs a **CRYOPLANT** where the core is a gas-cycle refrigerator (or liquefier).

Thermodynamic reminders for refrigeration

To cool down or/and liquefy a gas, an adapted thermodynamical cycle is needed, exhausting heat at hot source with an absorption of work, for extracting caloric energy at cold source.



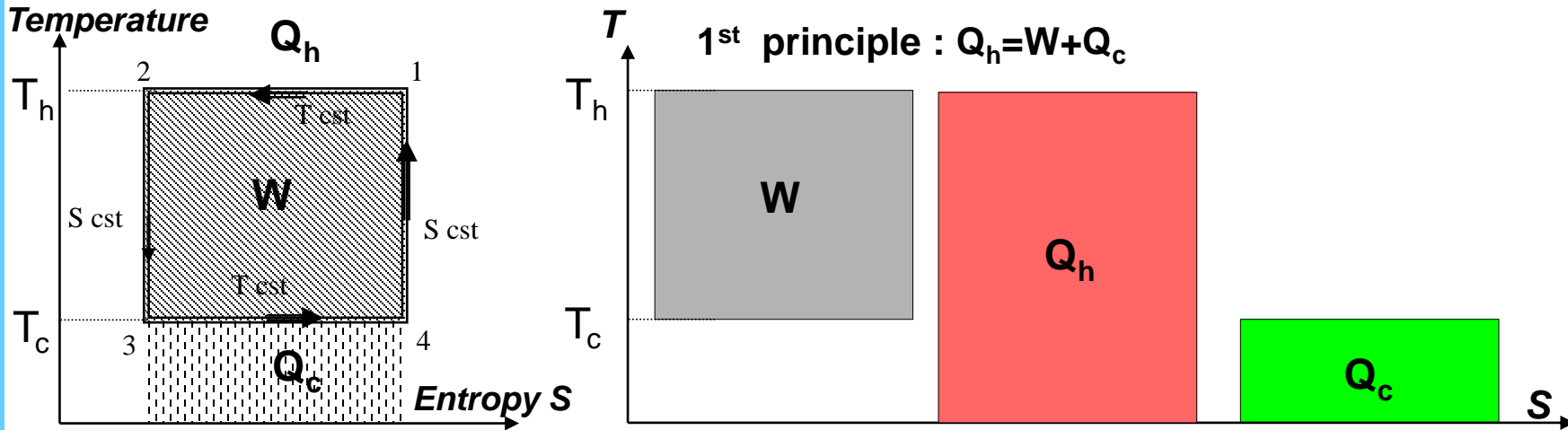
What thermodynamic says :

*Heat cannot flow spontaneously (without compensation) from cold source towards hot source => **work W is needed***

*It is impossible that a system can absorb refrigeration from the external environment with a monothermal cycle => T_c and T_f as **2 sources at minimum***

Ideal Refrigeration

Ideal Carnot cycle (reverse cycle) (2 isothermals + 2 isentropics)



For a gas closed cycle , 4 steps :

- 1- 2 : Isothermal compression (exhaust of Q_h from the hot source)
- 2-3 : Adiabatic cooling down
- 3-4 : Isothermal transf (absorption of Q_c by the cold source)
- 4-1 : Adiabatic warming up

$$COP(Carnot) = \frac{Q_c}{W} = \frac{T_c}{T_h - T_c}$$

Coefficient of performance

$$Specific\ power\ (W/W) = \frac{1}{COP} = \frac{W}{Q_c}$$

Needed power to absorb 1 W at T_c

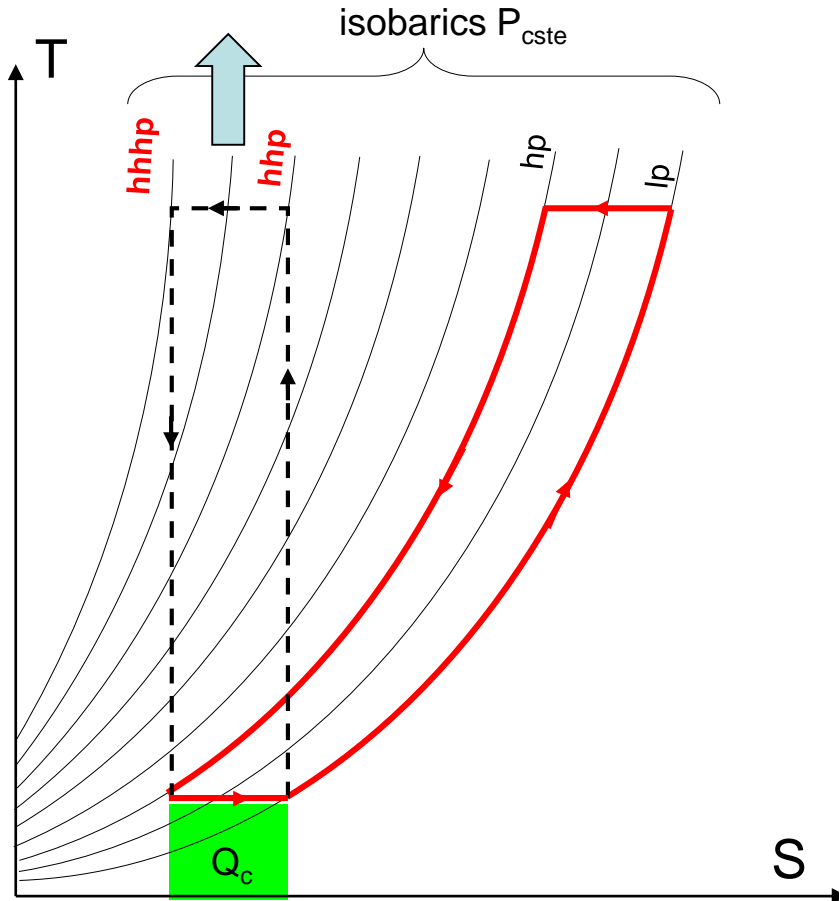
as « reference performances »

$T_h=293\ K$	$T_c\ 4,2\ K$	$T_c= 20\ K$	$T_c=77\ K$
$1/COP\ (W_{at\ 293\ K} / W_{at\ T_r})$	70	14	2,9

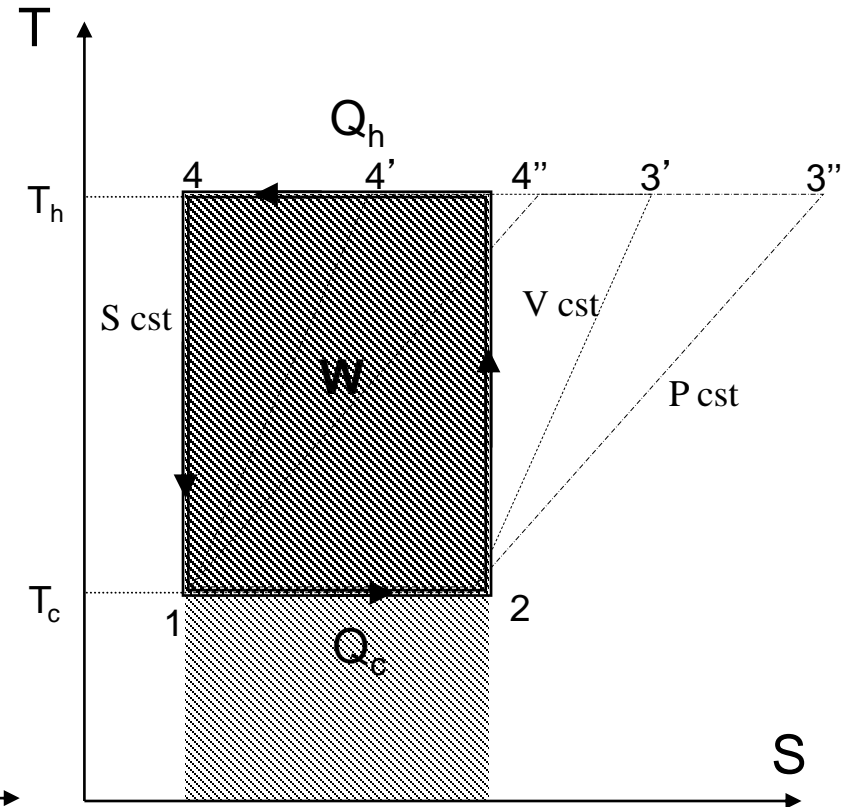
Equivalent cycles compared to Carnot ideal cycle



Very high P
+ $\Delta S = 0$ along large DT



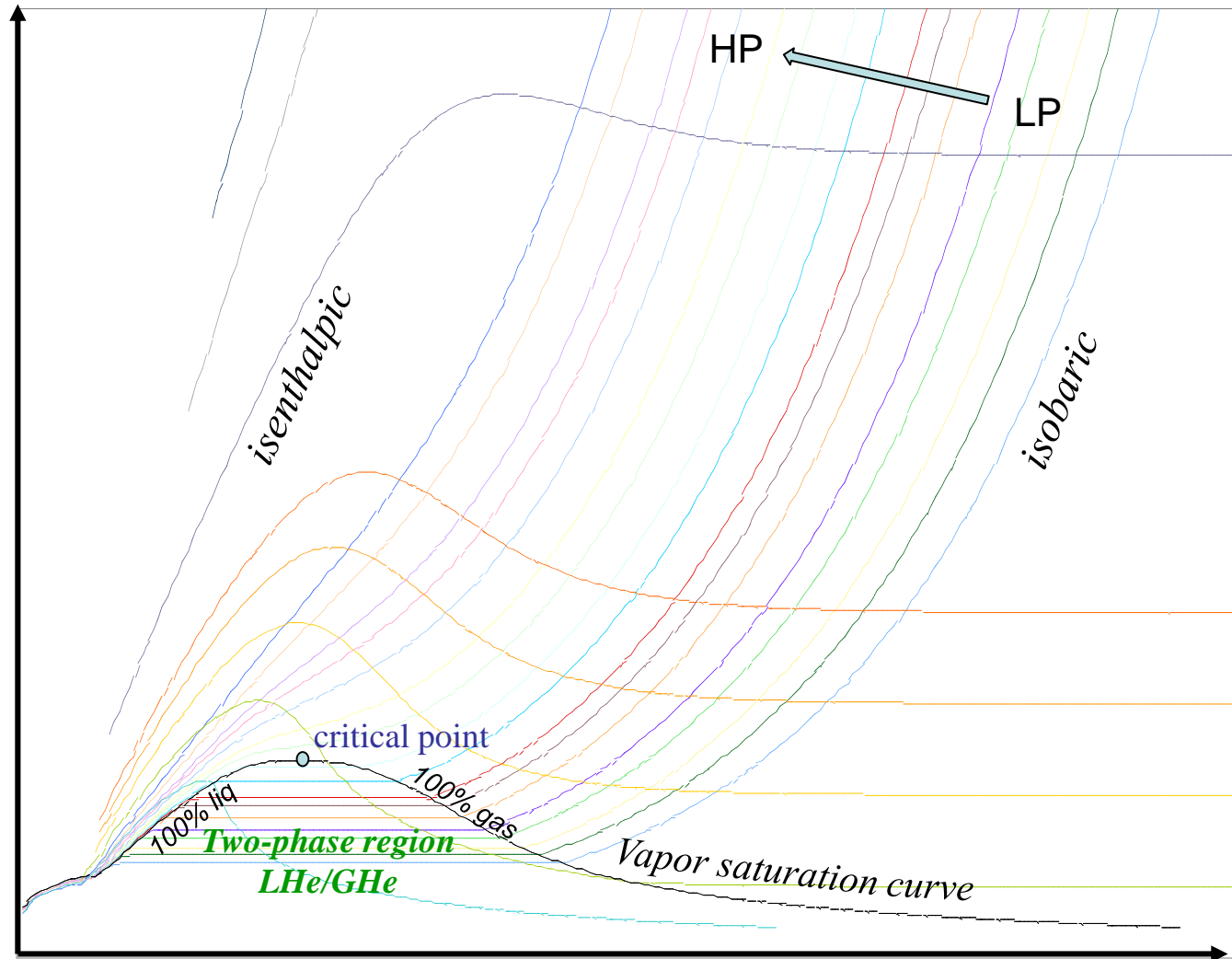
Replace isentropics by **isobarics** or **isochorics**. Same efficiency than Carnot (for a perfect gas where isobaric curves are parallel...)



- 1-2-3-4 : **Carnot** (isothermal-isentropic)
- 1-2-3'-4' : **Stirling** (isothermal-isochoric)
- 1-2-3''-4'' : **Ericsson** (isothermal-isobaric)

T-S diagram (Helium at low temperature)

Temperature T (K)

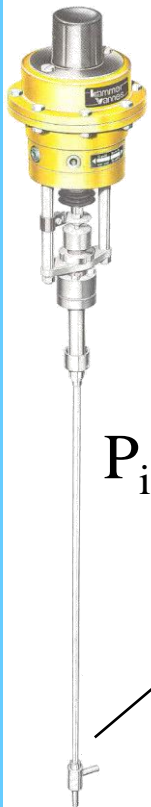


Entropy S (J.kg⁻¹.K⁻¹)

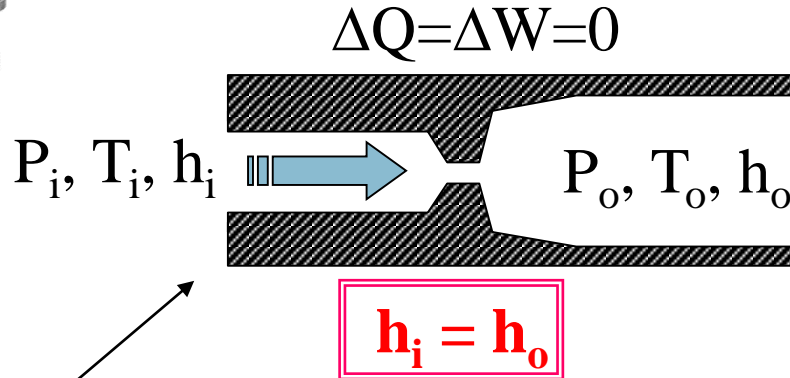
What kind of gas expansion can be realized for reaching low temperature ?

« Joule-Thomson » expansion

Adiabatic and without external work (only internal work)
 => **isenthalpic** but irreversible



Cryogenic valve

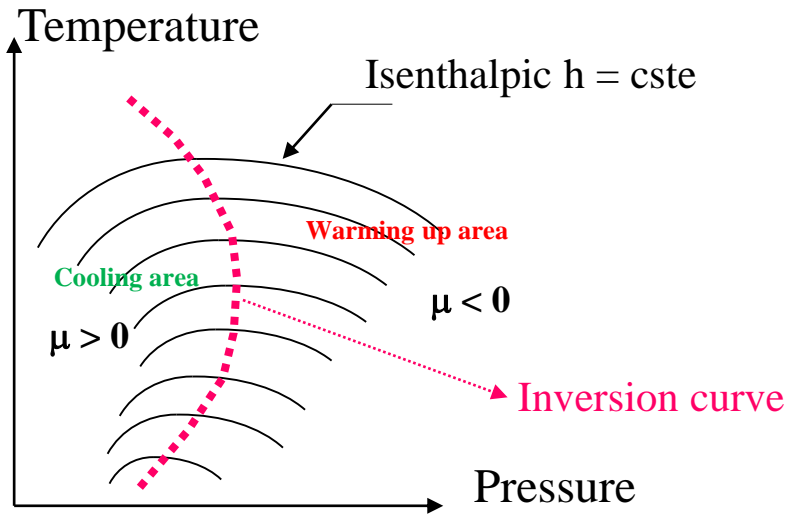


$$dh = C_p dT + (k + V) dP = C_p dP + (V - T \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_P) dP = 0$$

where $k = -T \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_P$

$$\Rightarrow dT = -\frac{V}{c_p} \left[1 - \frac{T}{V} \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T}\right)_P \right] dP = \frac{V}{c_p} (\alpha_V T - 1) dP = \mu_{JT} dP$$

$$\mu_{JT} = \frac{\alpha_V T}{c_p} \left(\frac{\partial T}{\partial P} \right)_h$$

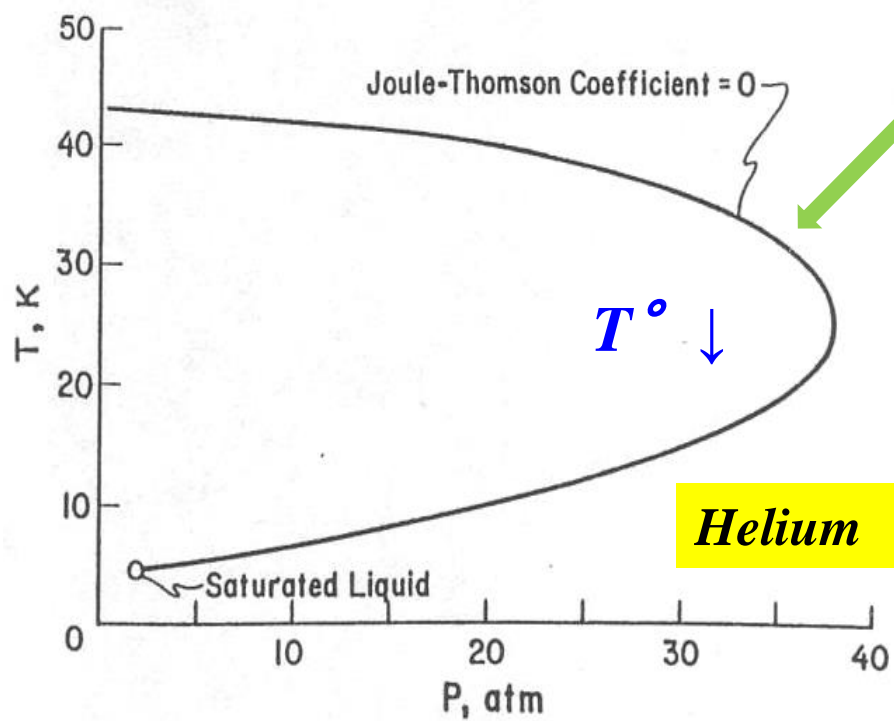
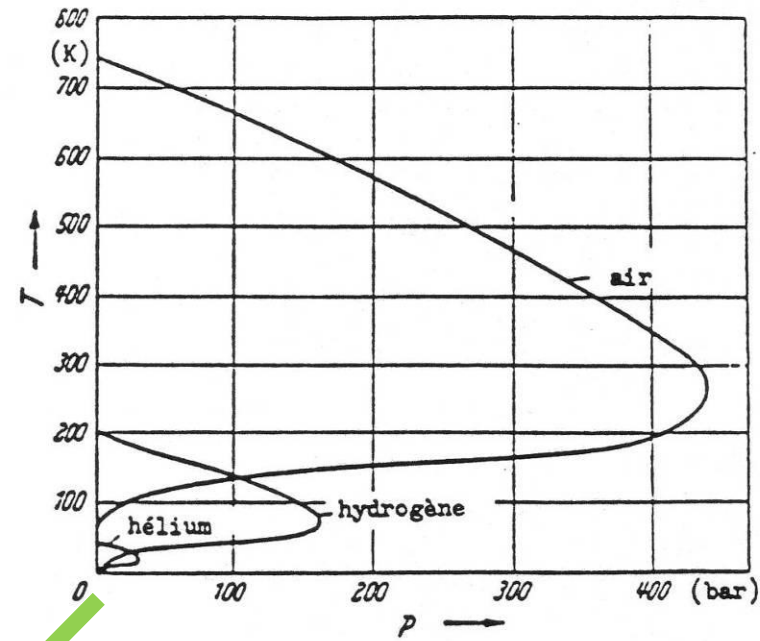


Joule-Thomson Coefficient
 > 0 => expansion with T ↓
 < 0 => expansion with T ↑

R : μ=0 in perfect gases

Examples of inversion curves

Gas	maximum inversion T° (K)
O2	761
Ar	722
N2	622
Air	603
Ne	250
H2	202
He	40



Strong limitation of cooling effect with a JT expansion in He !

Isentropic expansion

Isentropic expansion (ideally adiabatic and reversible)

- obtained with **external recovery of work** and **no heat transfer**

$$\Delta Q=0 \quad \text{and} \quad \Delta W < 0$$

$$S_i = S_o$$

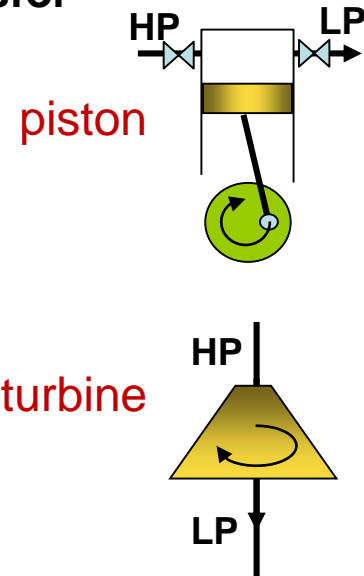
$$\delta Q = TdS = C_p dT + kdP = C_p dT - T \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T} \right)_P dP = 0$$

$$\text{with } k = -T \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T} \right)_P$$

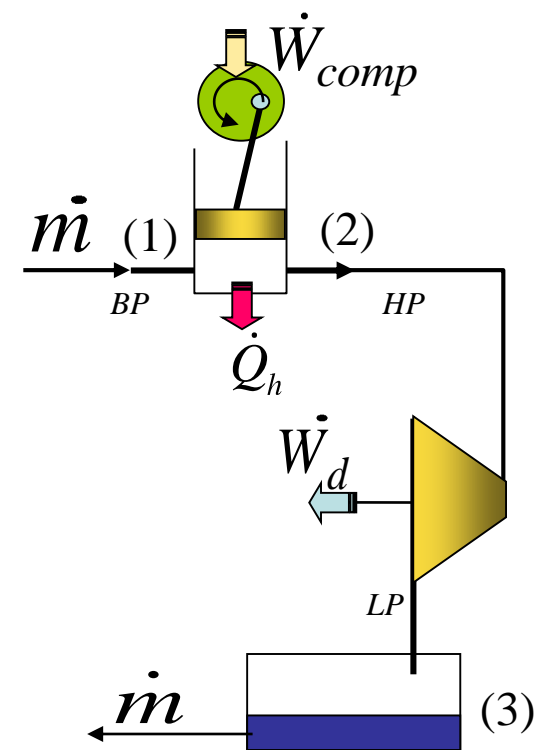
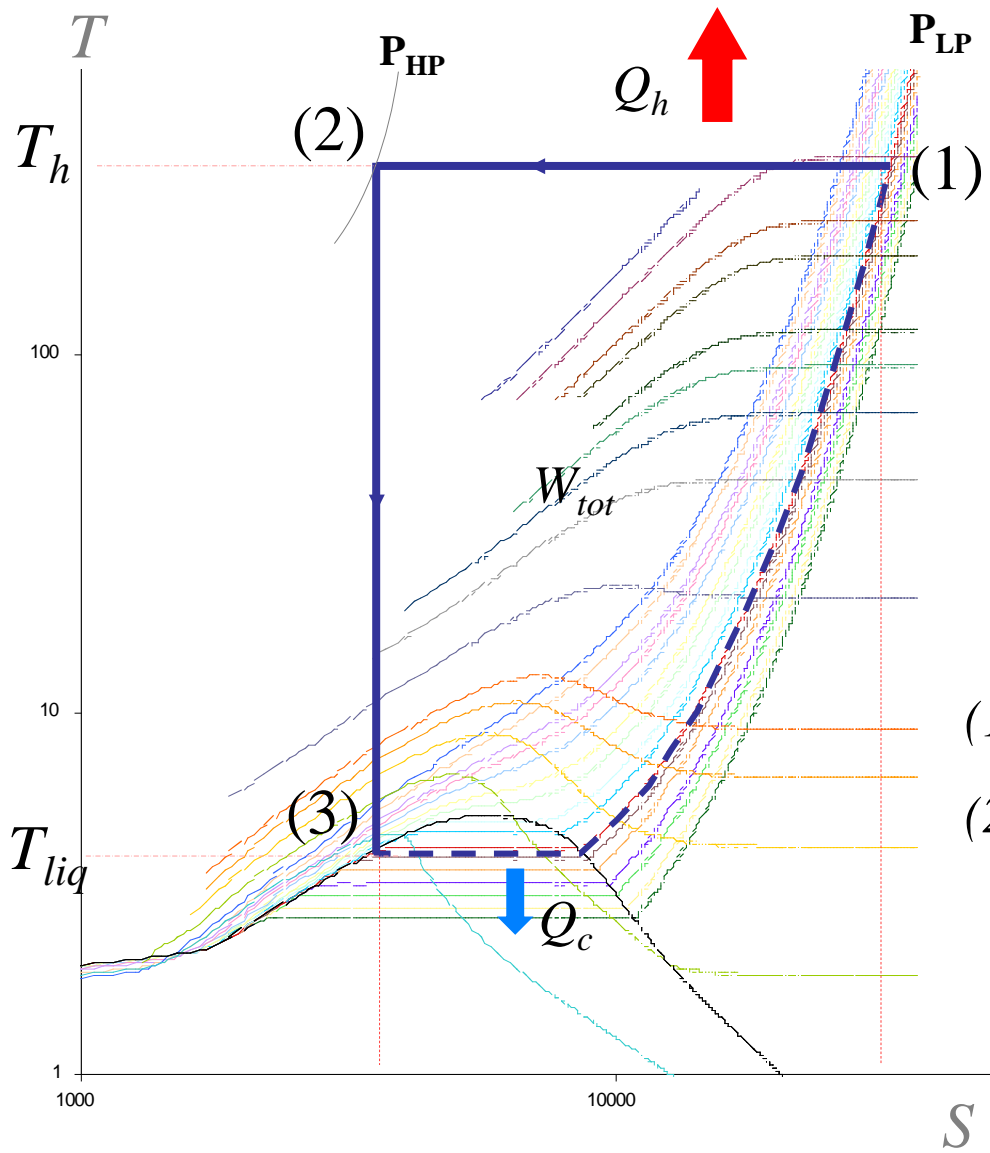
$$\Rightarrow dT = \frac{T}{C_p} \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T} \right)_P dP = \frac{V\alpha_V T}{C_p} dP \quad \text{and} \quad \alpha_V = \frac{1}{V} \left(\frac{\partial V}{\partial T} \right)_P$$

$$m_{DS=0} = \left(\frac{\partial T}{\partial P} \right)_S > 0$$

With an isentropic expansion, the temperature variation is always negative and much larger than for isenthalpic expansion (JT).



The minimum work for liquefying from 300 K and 1 bar (P_{atm})



- (1) -> (2) isothermal compression
- (2) -> (3) isentropic expansion

$$W_{tot} = Q_h - Q_c$$

$$\frac{W_{tot}}{\dot{m}} = T_h \cdot (s_1 - s_3) - (h_1 - h_3)$$

Ideal liquefaction (real gases)

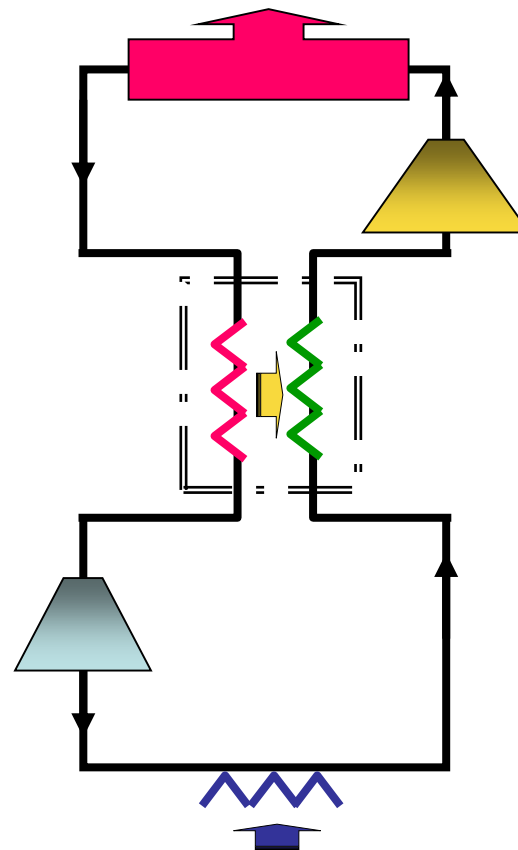
(from P_{atm})

Fluid	Boiling temperature at 1 atm (K)	$W_{tot} = W_{ideal}$ (J/g)	$W_{tot} = W_{ideal}$ (W/(l/h))
Oxygen (O ₂)	90	634	202
Argon (Ar)	87	476	188
Air	80	722	176
Nitrogen (N ₂)	77	761	171
Hydrogen (H ₂)	20,4	11890	231
Helium (He)	4,2	6807	236

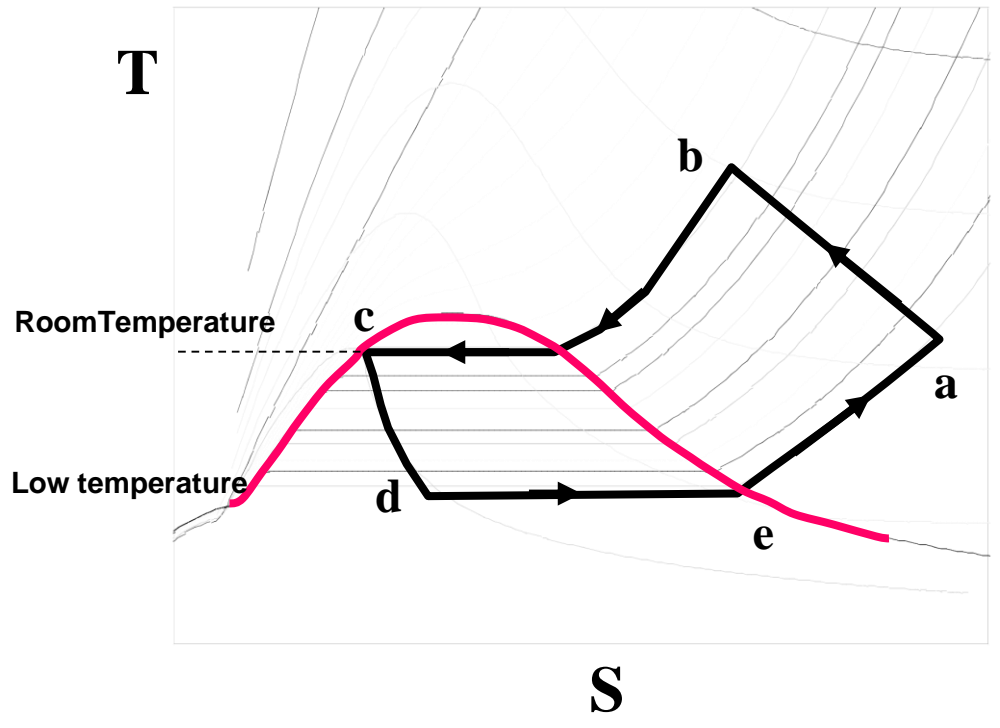
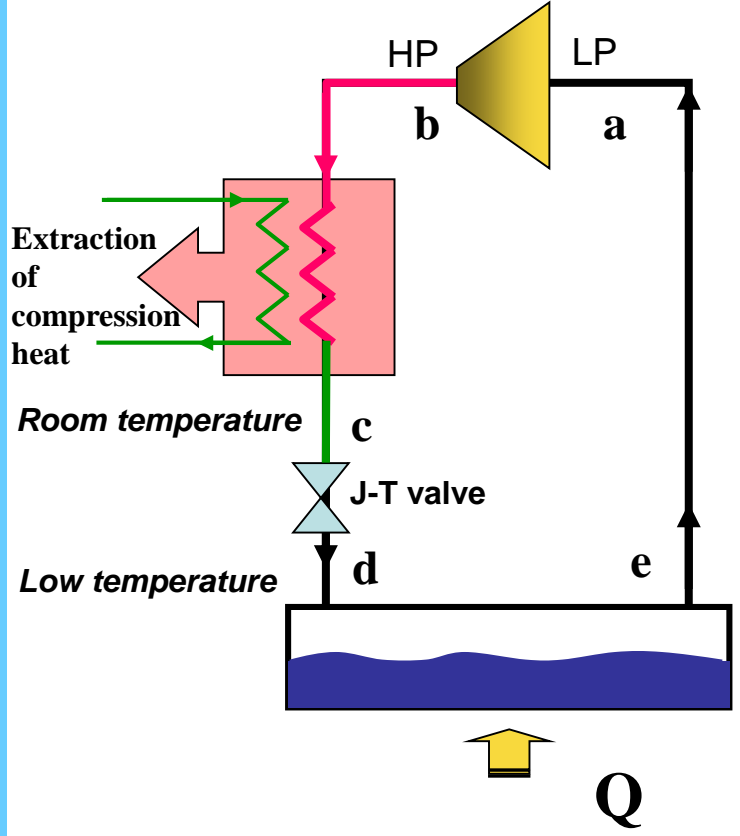
Ideal but not realistic (too high pressure and impossible perfect isentropic on a large ΔT)

Ex : Helium High Pressure needed = 10^6 atm !!!!

Realistic continuous flux gas cycles



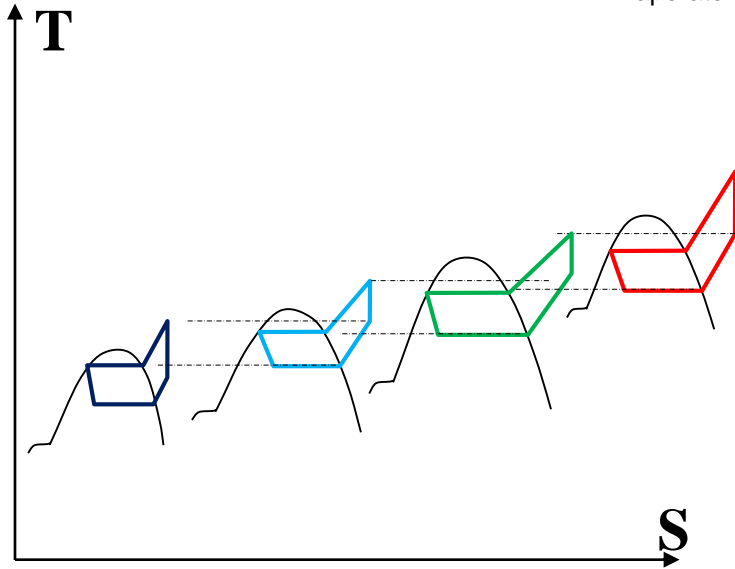
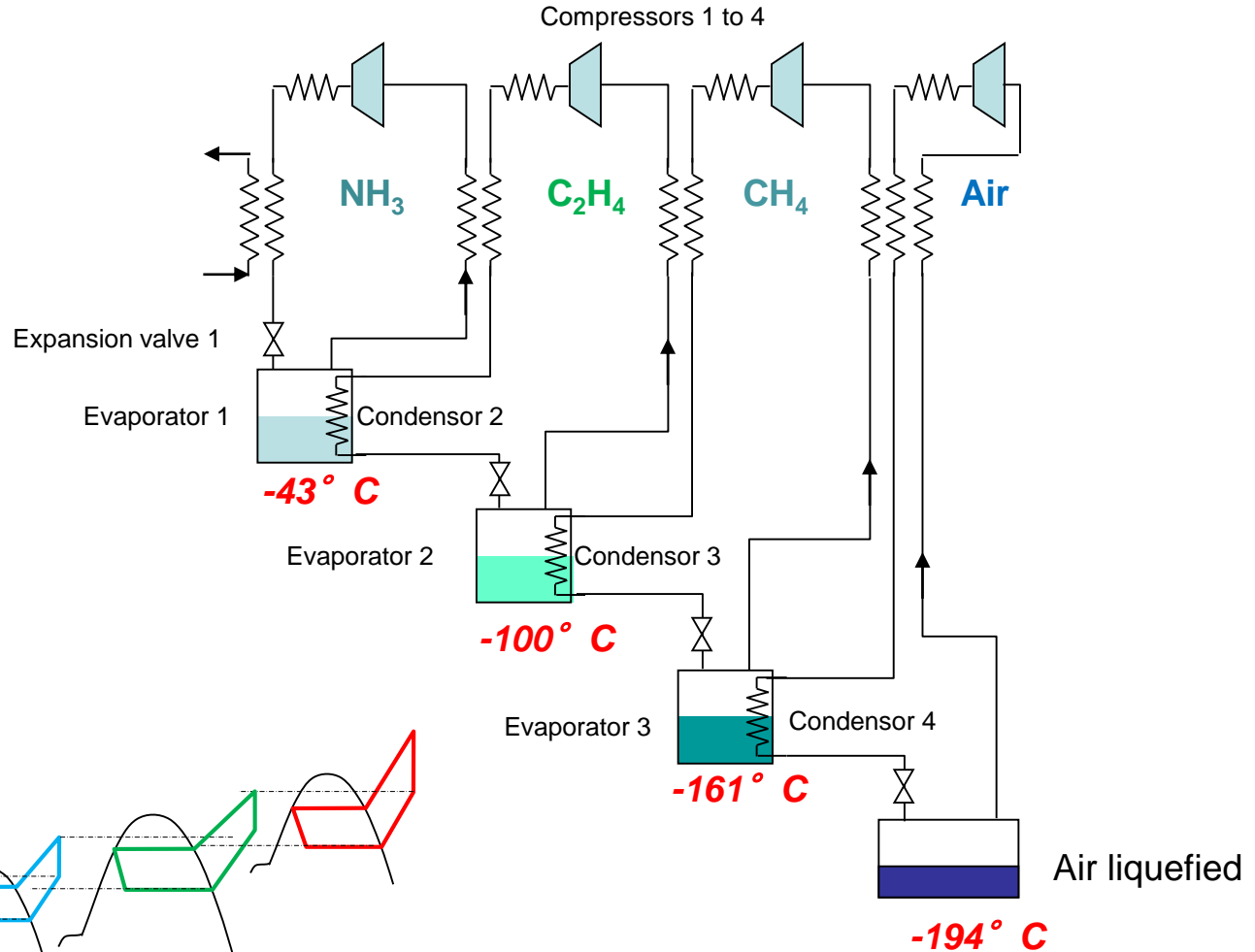
Vapor compression cycle



Used in « industrial or domestic » refrigeration process but limited in range due to :

- Low temperature difference reachable in wet vapor between triple and critical points
- Necessity of using a refrigerant fluid with a saturation temperature close to the room temperature (compressor)

Compression vapor cycle in cascading

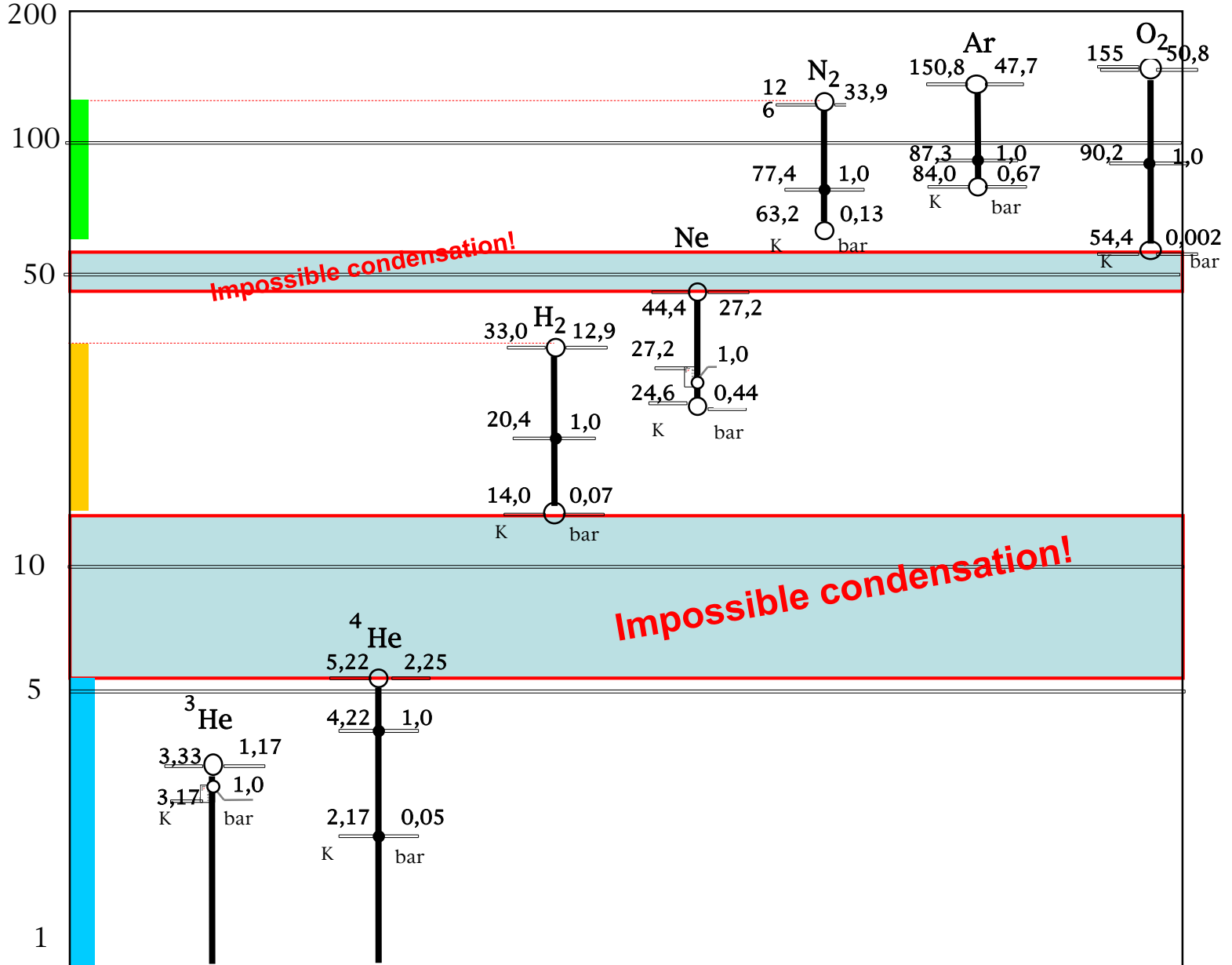


4 fluids in // :
NH₃, C₂H₄, CH₄, air
with overlapping of wet vapor domains



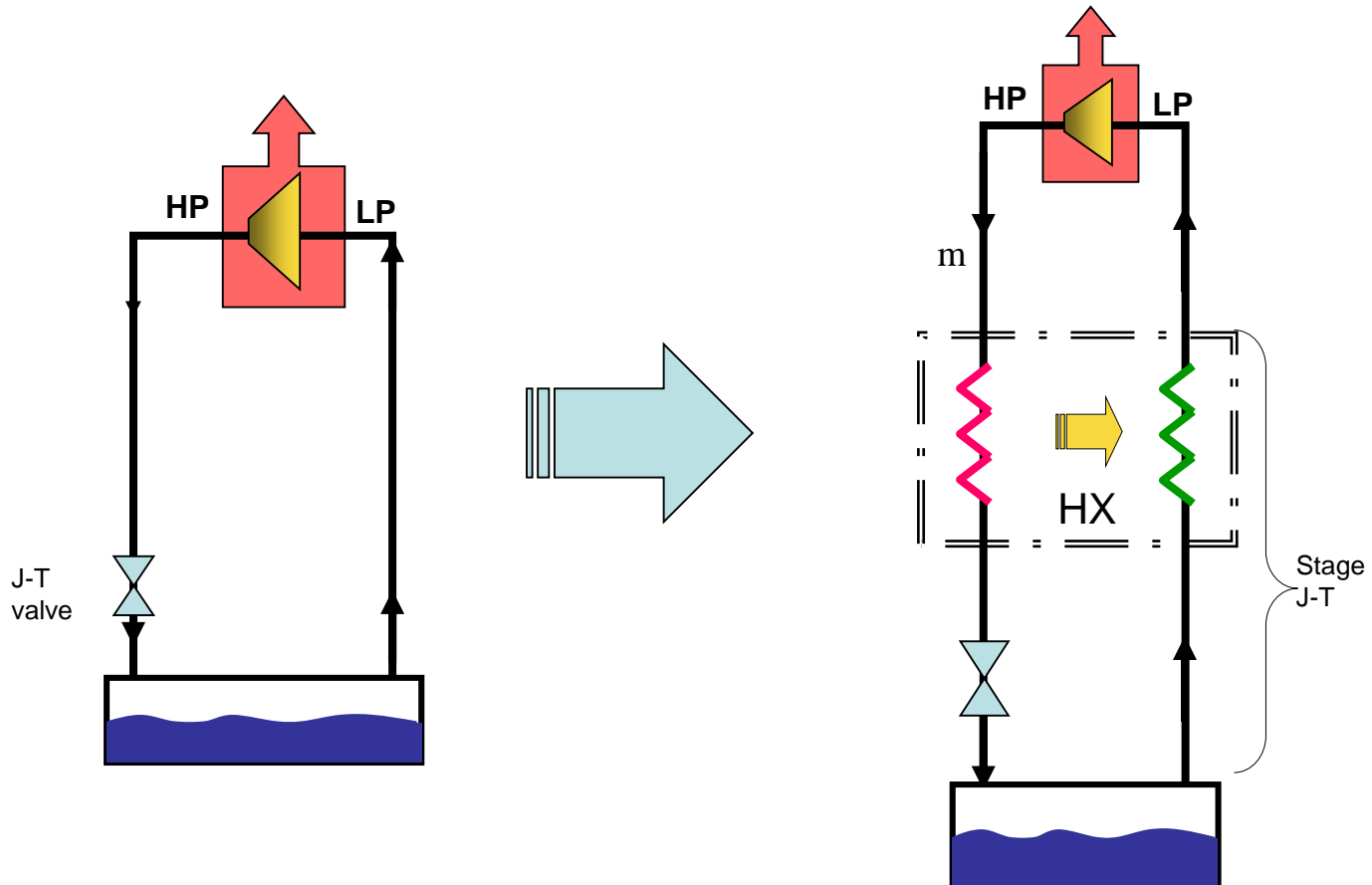
T in K

Cryofluid range with « no liquid » areas



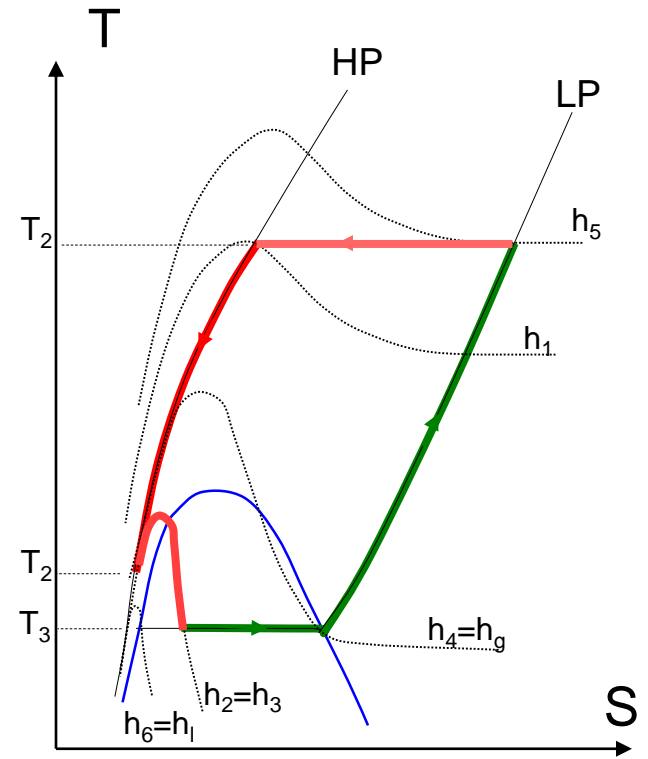
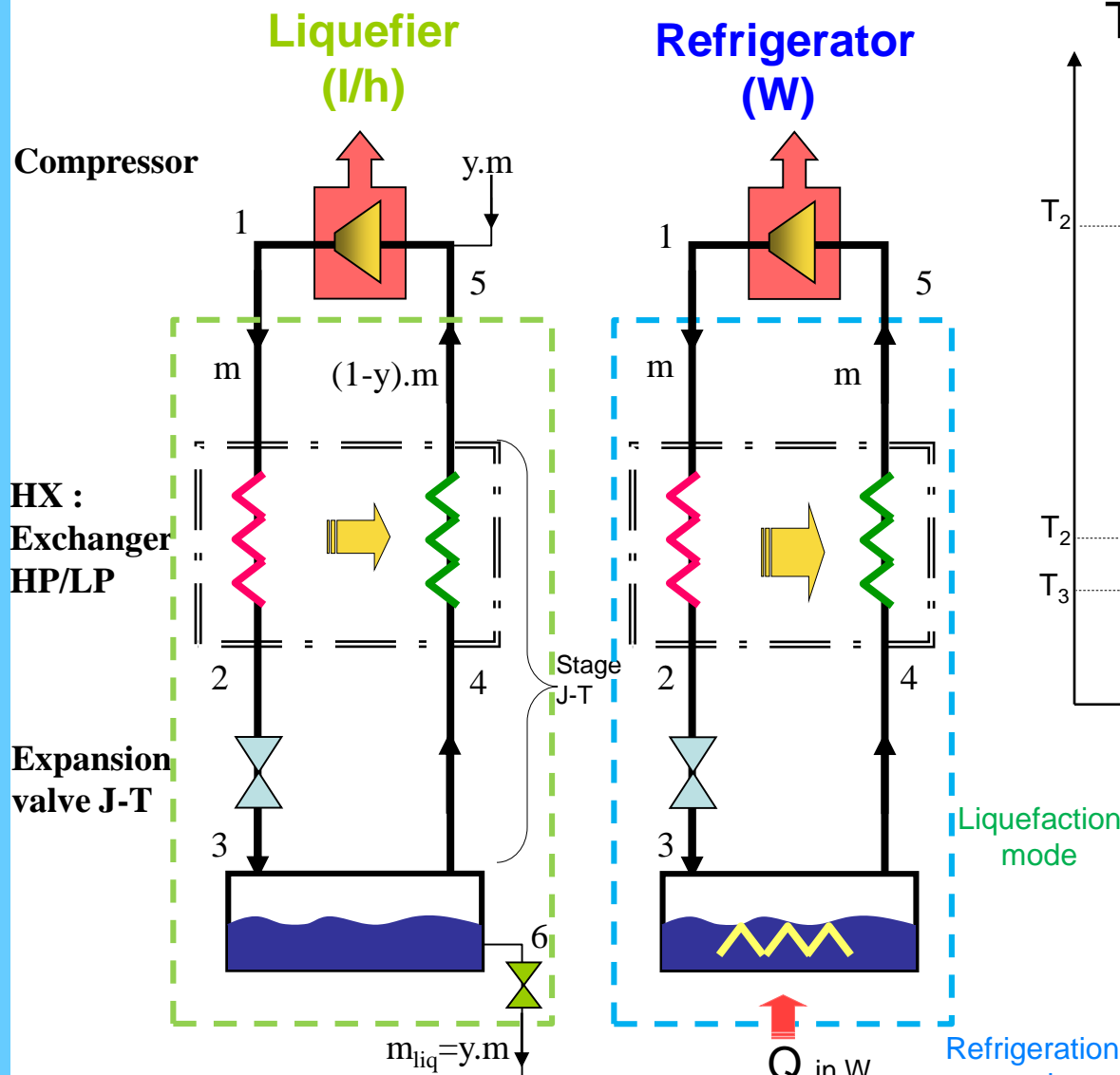
Linde-Hampson cycle : recovering cold gas enthalpy

Joule-Thomson expansion (adiabatic without external work = isenthalpic)
+ **recuperative heat exchanger (counterflow)**



Linde-Hampson cycle :

*Joule-Thomson expansion (adiabatic without external work = isenthalpic)
+ recuperative exchangeur*



$$\dot{m} \times h_1 = (\dot{m} - \dot{m}_{liq}) \times h_5 + \dot{m}_{liq} \times h_{liq}$$

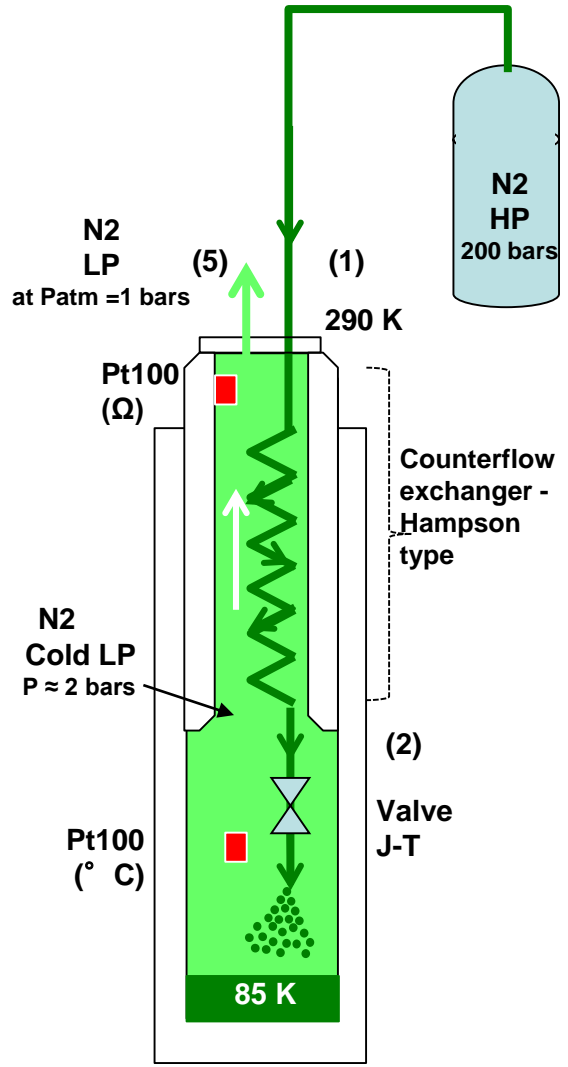
$$y = \frac{\dot{m}_{liq}}{\dot{m}} \quad \text{or} \quad y_{lique} = \frac{(h_5 - h_1)}{(h_5 - h_{liq})}$$

$$Q_{ref} = \dot{m} \times (h_5 - h_1) = \dot{m} \times (h_{gaz} - h_3)$$

$$\text{or} \quad y_{refrig} = \frac{(h_5 - h_1)}{(h_{gaz} - h_{liq})} > y_{lique}$$

Linde-Hampson cycle for Nitrogen

- Compressor 200 atm (or HP cylinder)
- Counterflow heat exchanger
- Expansion valve



Vacuum insulated cryostat

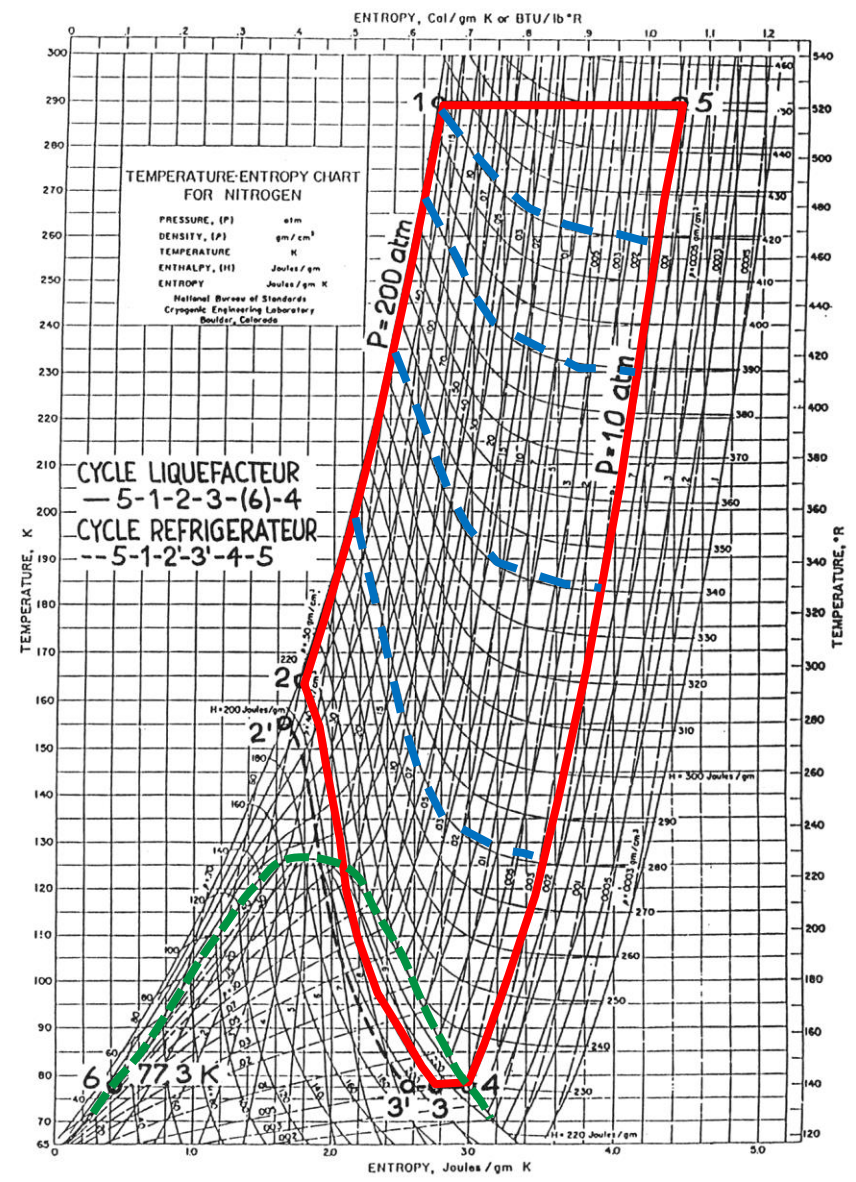
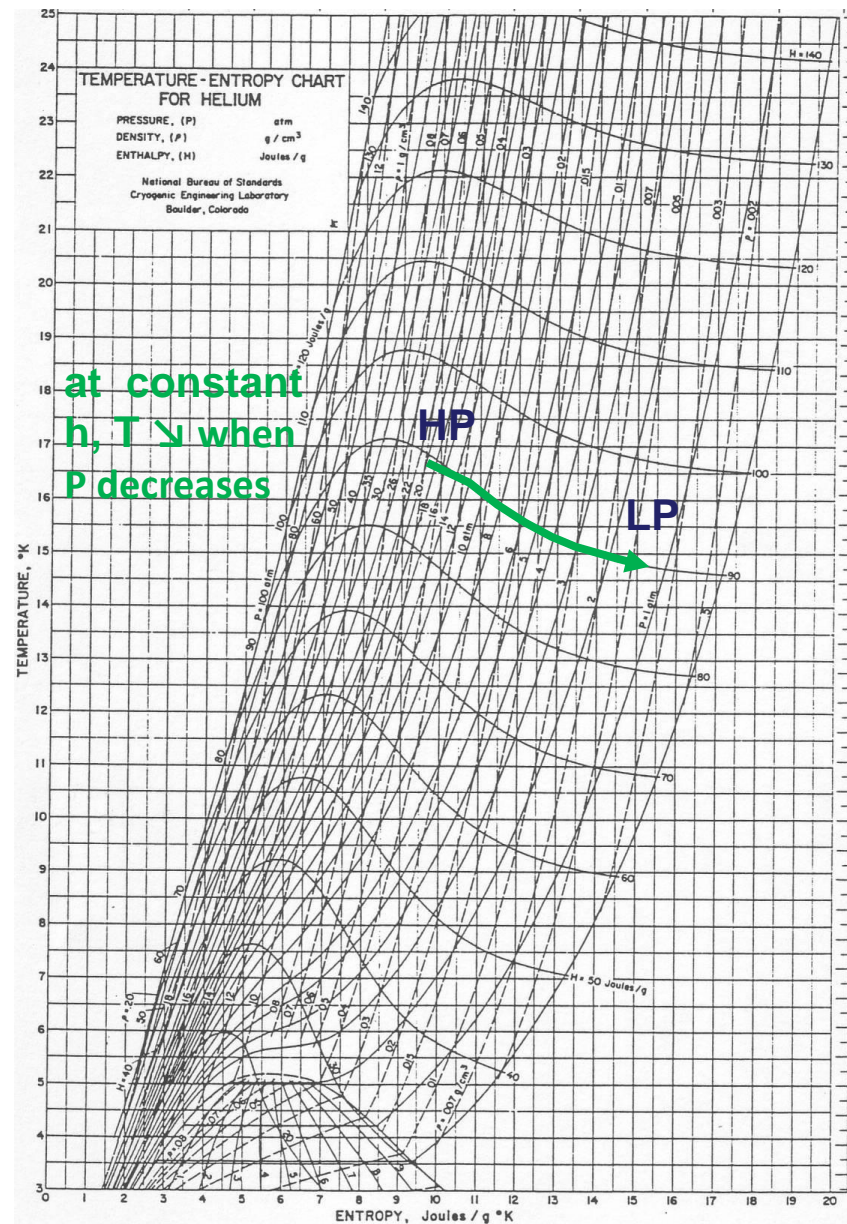
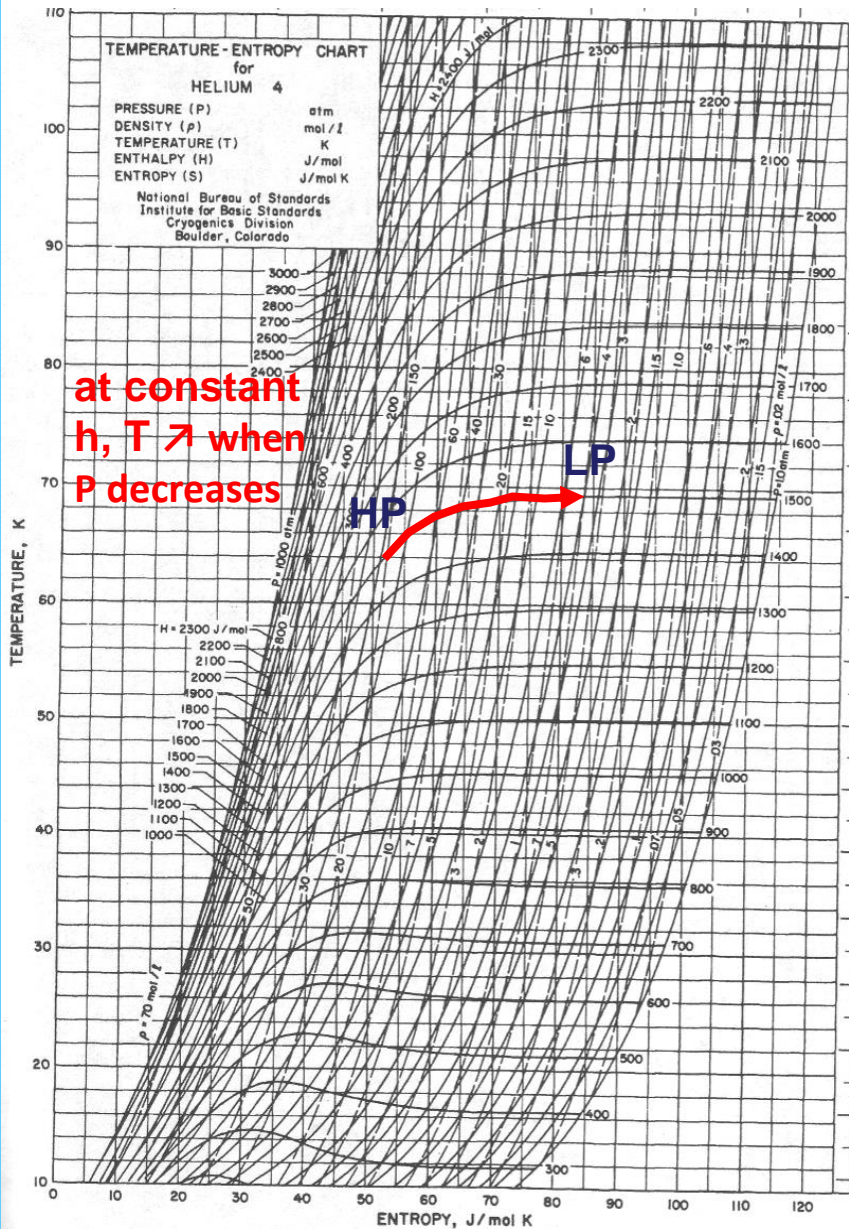


FIG. 9.3.4. : CYCLE DE LINDE (REFRIGERATEUR ET LIQUEFACTEUR) AU DIAGRAMME TEMPERATURE-ENTROPY

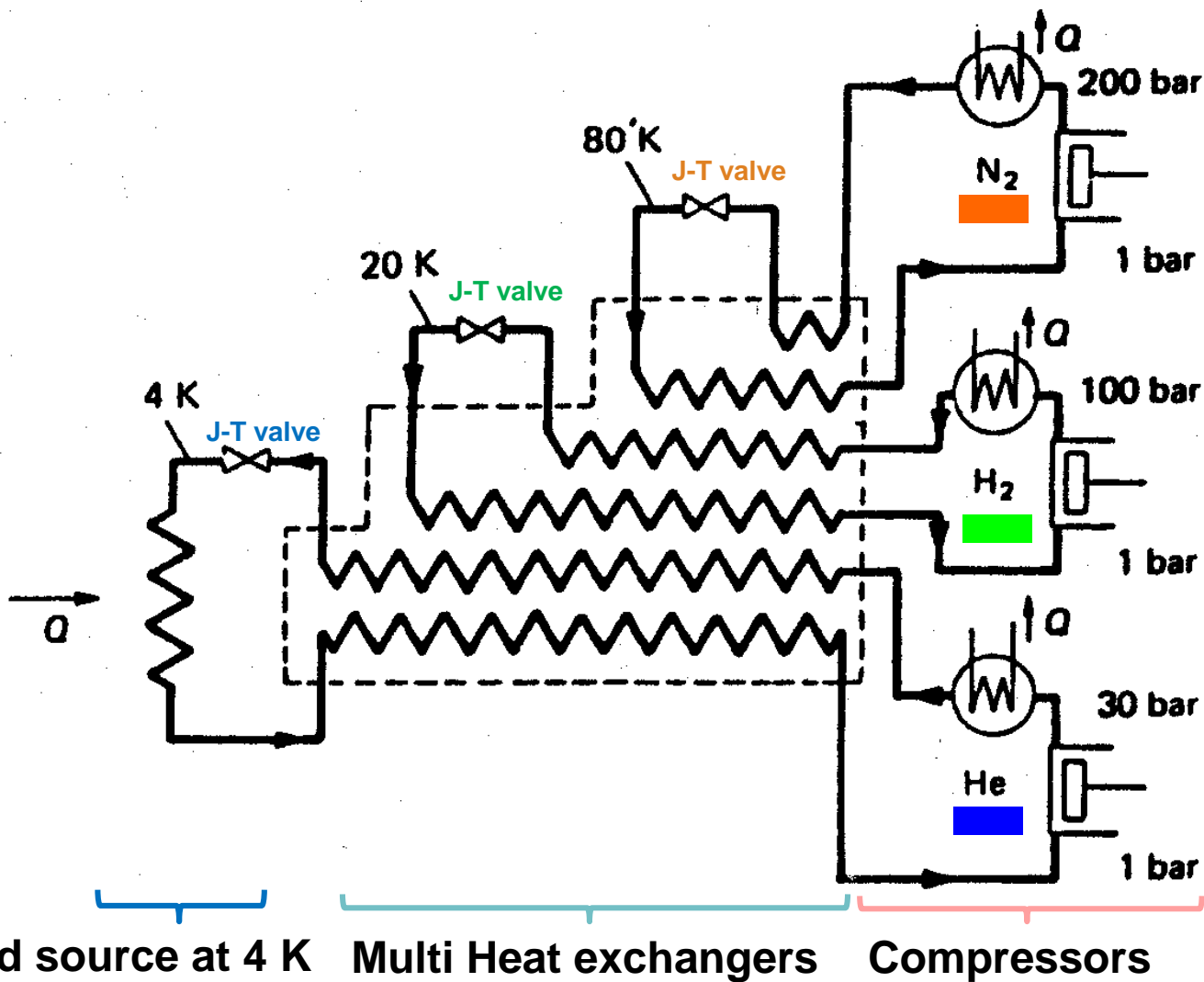
pour $P_1 = 200 \text{ ata}$ $T_1 = 290 \text{ K}$
 $P_5 = 1 \text{ ata}$ $T_5 = 290 \text{ K}$

Impossibility of single Linde-Hampson cycle 300-4 K for helium



For He : Cycle Linde-Hampson cycle in cascading

Historically, to reach helium liquid temperature...

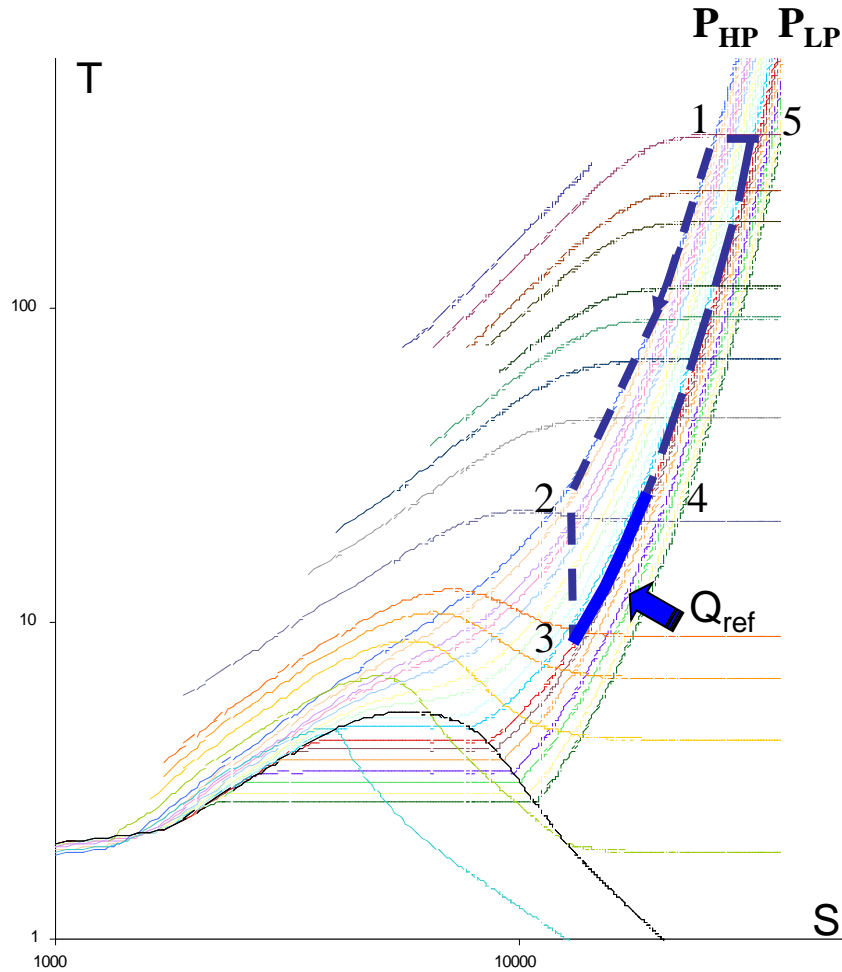


Courtesy of S Buhler

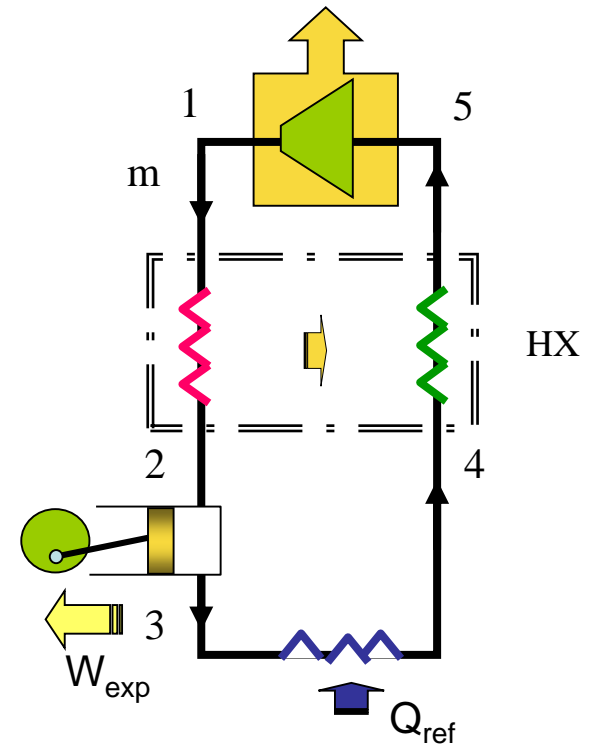
Brayton cycle :

replace JT valve by a work recuperative expander

Adiabatic expansion with work to be supplied = isentropic + recuperative heat exchanger



R : Refrigerator at variable T°



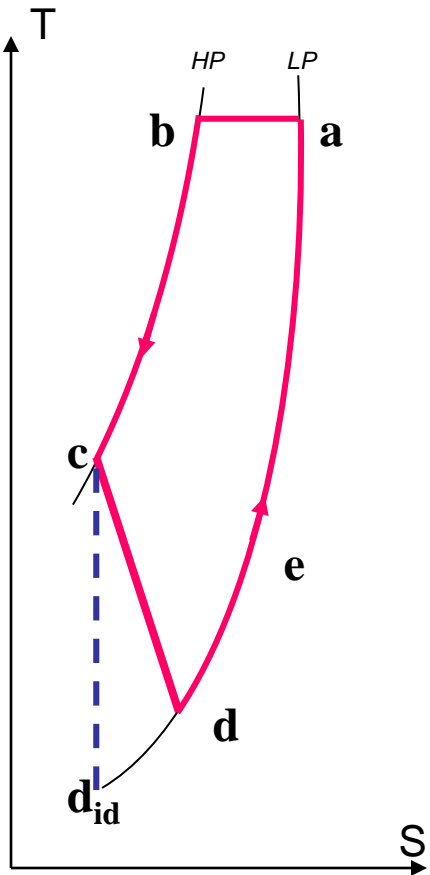
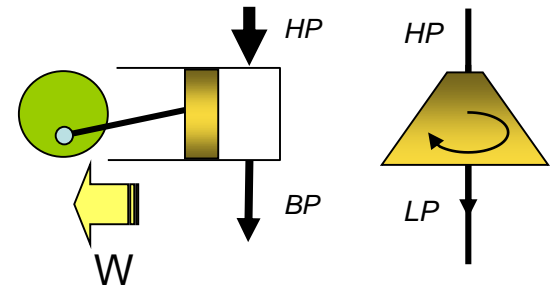
$$W_{\text{exp}} = m \times (h_2 - h_3)$$

$$Q_{\text{ref}} = m \times (h_4 - h_3)$$

Isentropic expansion or nearly...

Isentropic efficiency of an expansion device

$$\eta_{isen} = \frac{h_d - h_c}{h_{d_{id}} - h_c}$$



A.N : Helium

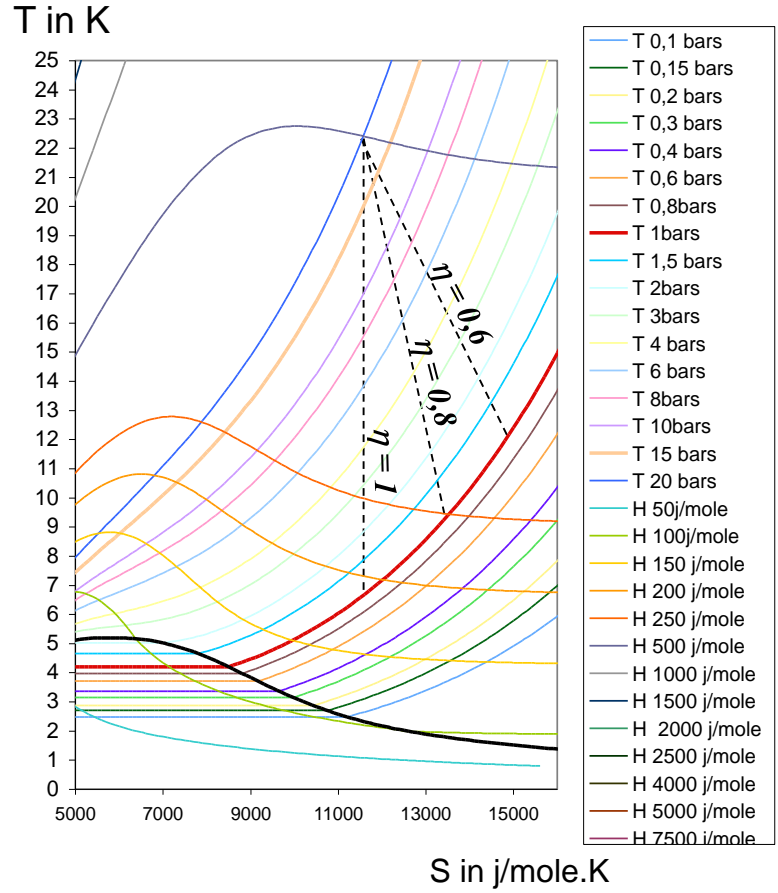
$T_{HP}=22,4$ K and $P_{HP}= 20$ bars
and $P_{BP}= 1$ bar

$\eta = 1$ (perfect isentropic)

$T= 6,6$ K
($h=46,6$ J/g)

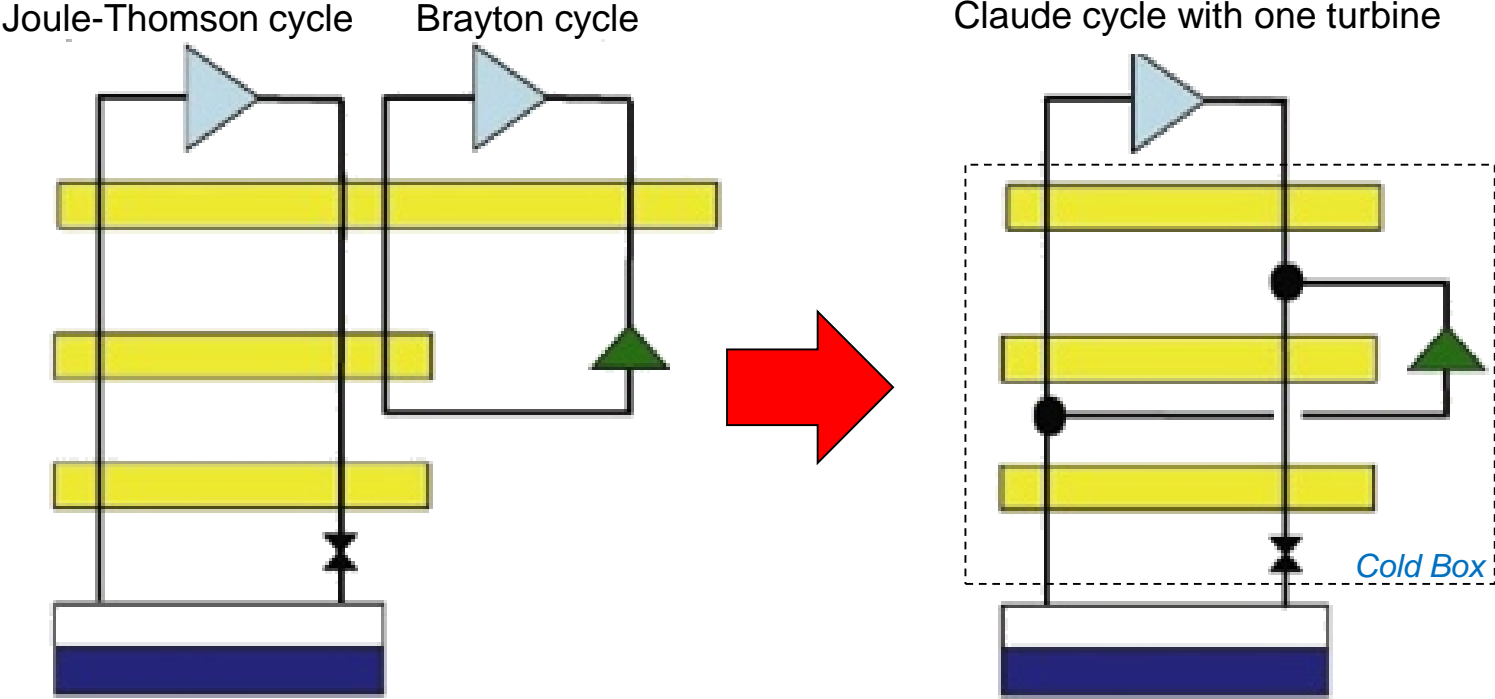
$\eta= 0,8$
 $T=9,3$ K
($h=62,0$ J/g)

$\eta= 0,6$
 $T=12,2$ K
($h=77,4$ J/g)



Claude cycle

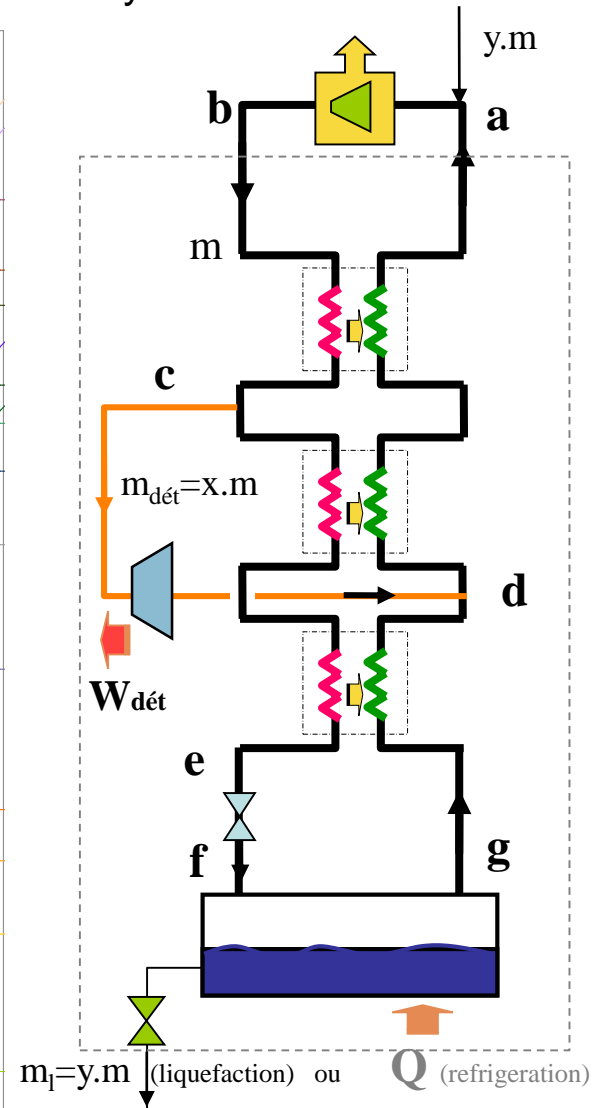
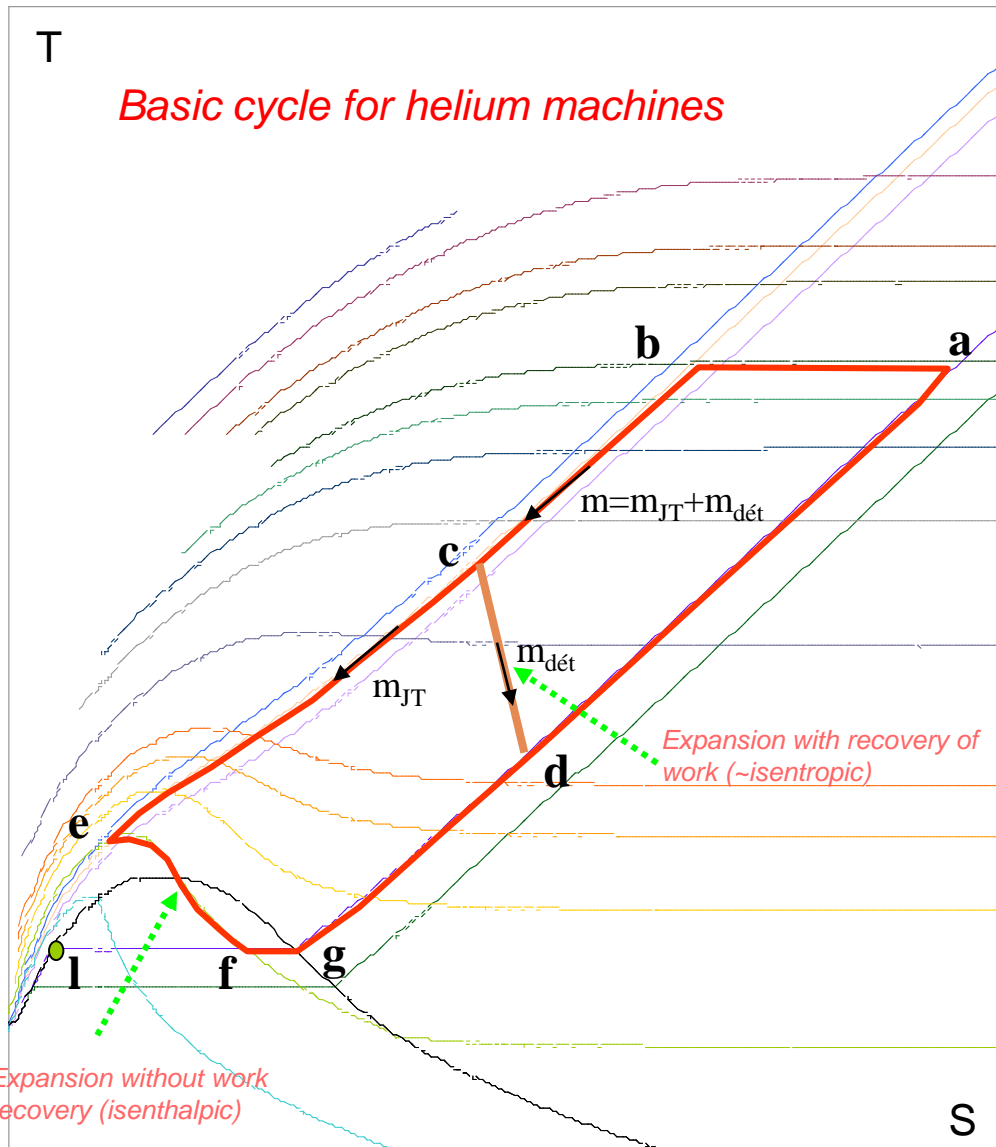
Mixing of Brayton cycle and Joule-Thomson cycle



One fluid, one compressor,
2 types of expansion !!!
The principle of cycle used today for
large refrigeration or liquefaction

Claude cycle

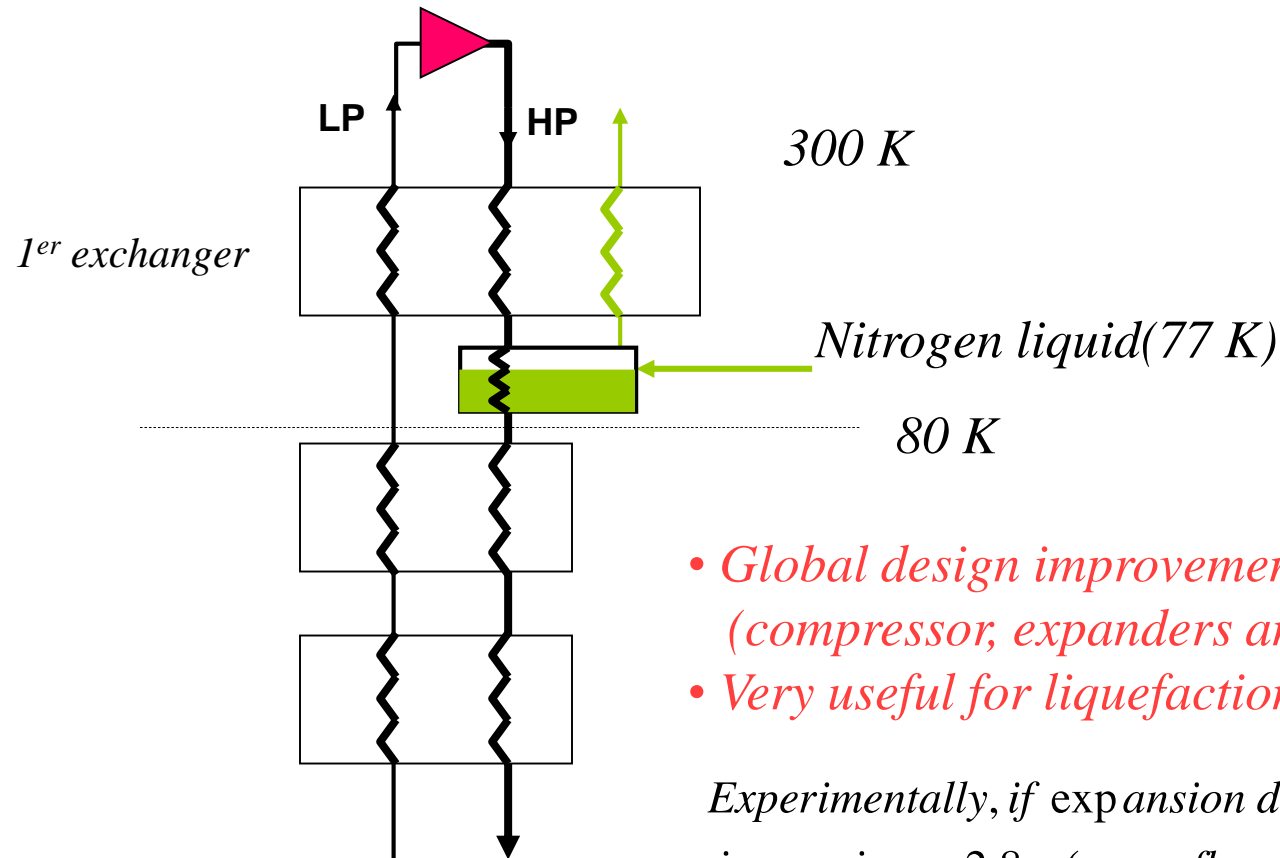
Mixing a Brayton cycle and Joule-Thomson cycle



Ideal rate liquefaction

$$y = \frac{h_a - h_b}{h_a - h_l} + x \times \frac{h_c - h_d}{h_a - h_l}$$

Nitrogen pre-cooling in the top of a Cold Box (Helium cycle)



- *Global design improvement by size reducing (compressor, expanders and exchangers)*
- *Very useful for liquefaction*

Experimentally, if expansion devices < 80 K :

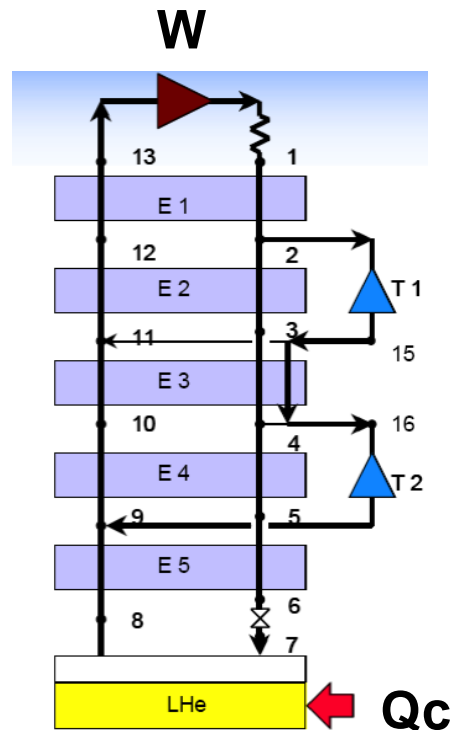
$$\dot{m}_{LN_2} \approx \dot{m}_{LHe} \times 2.8 \quad (\text{mass flowrate})$$

ratio of liquid flows

$$\dot{V}_{LN_2} \approx \dot{V}_{LHe} \times 0.43 \quad (\text{volume rate})$$

Examples of machines : « small » He refrigerator/liquefier

From a few tenth to hundred of W @ 4.5 K (Q_c) : 1 to 2 turboexpanders (turbines) + 1 JT valve



Specific power (W/Q_c)

> 500 W/W

R : Carnot = 70 W/W



Commercial data from Air Liquide

Liquefaction capacities and consumption	HELIAL SL	HELIAL ML	HELIAL LL
Capacity with nitrogen pre-cooling	From 35 to 85 L/h	From 110 to 170 L/h	From 200 to 330 L/h
Capacity without nitrogen pre-cooling	From 15 to 40 L/h	From 45 to 80 L/h	From 100 to 150 L/h
Compressor power	From 55 to 90 kW	From 110 to 160 kW	From 200 to 315 kW

Commercial data from Linde Kryotechnik

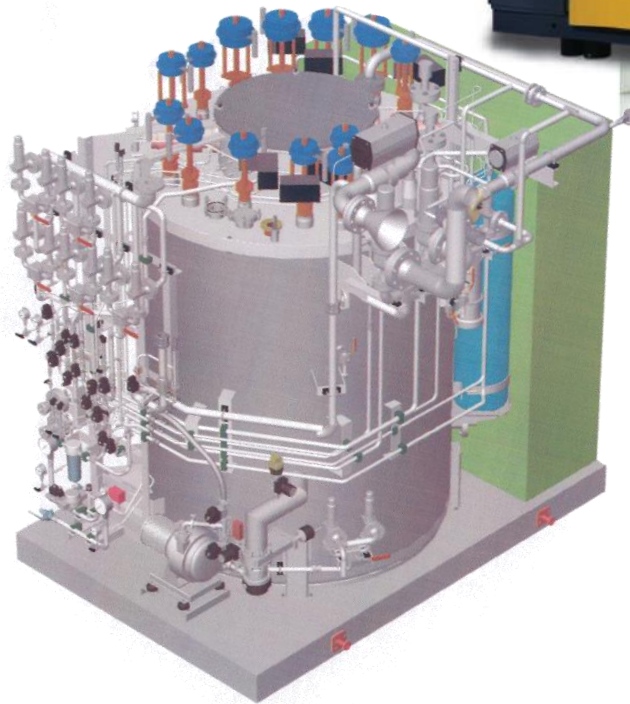
	Without LN ₂ precooling	With LN ₂ precooling
L70	20-35 l/h	40-70 l/h
L140	45-70 l/h	90-140 l/h
L280	100-145 l/h	200-290 l/h
LR70	on request	130-190 Watt
LR140	210-290 Watt	255-400 Watt
LR280	445-640 Watt	560-900 Watt



Examples of machines : « small » He refrigerator/liquefier



*Cold Box
Helial 2000
(500 W or 150 l.h⁻¹)*



Cold Box Helial 2000



Compressor (69 g/s)

L'Air Liquide

Examples of machines : « small » He refrigerator/liquefier

Neurospin helium refrigerator (for 11.7 T MRI magnet)

Turbo-expander



Dedicated PLC for fully automatic operation

***200 W (ref) or 120 l/h (liq) or 70 l/h+ 40 W (mixed)
With a compressor 45 g/s @ 15 bars***



Adsorber pot

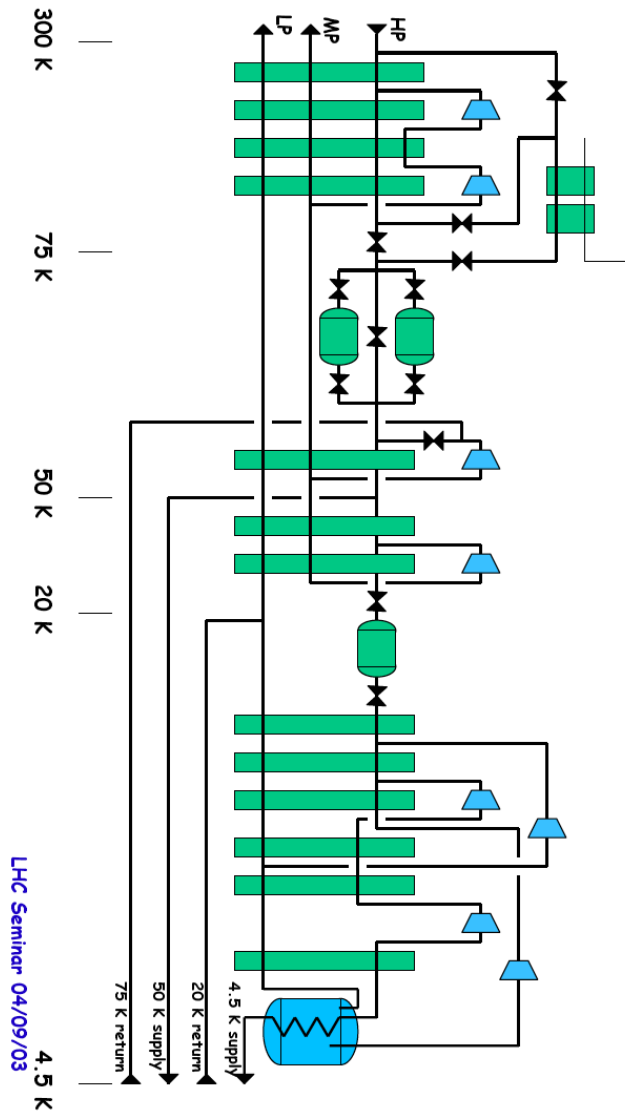
Heat exchangers

*Opened Cold Box without its
vacuum vessel*

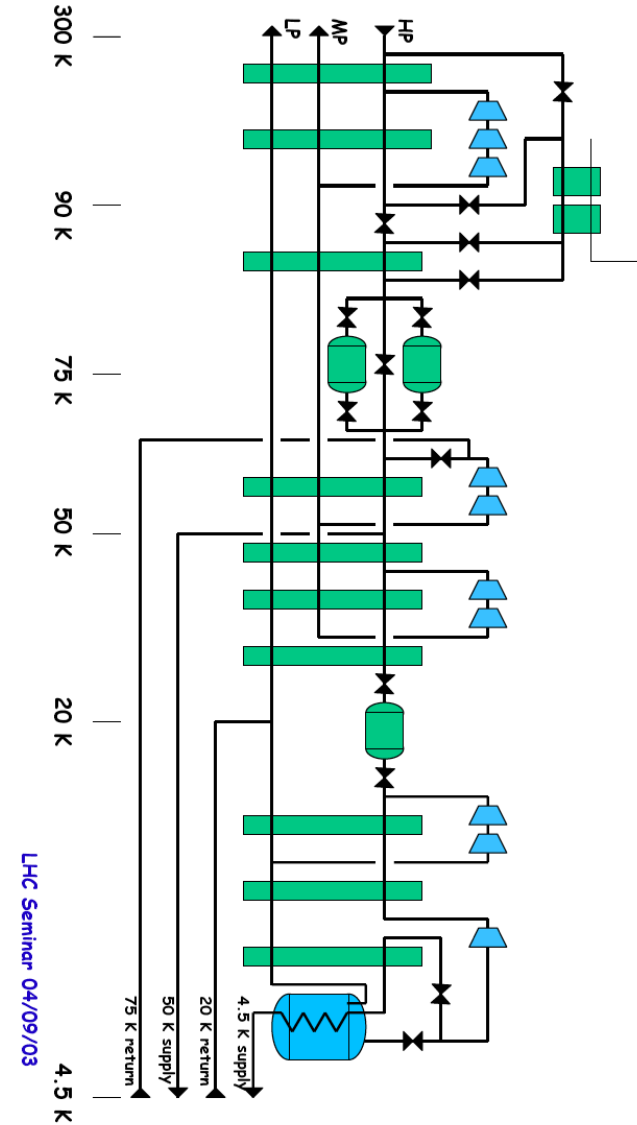
Examples of machines : large Helium Refrigeration

Ex : Cold Box LHC 18 kW @ 4.5 K Refrigerators

Air Liquide

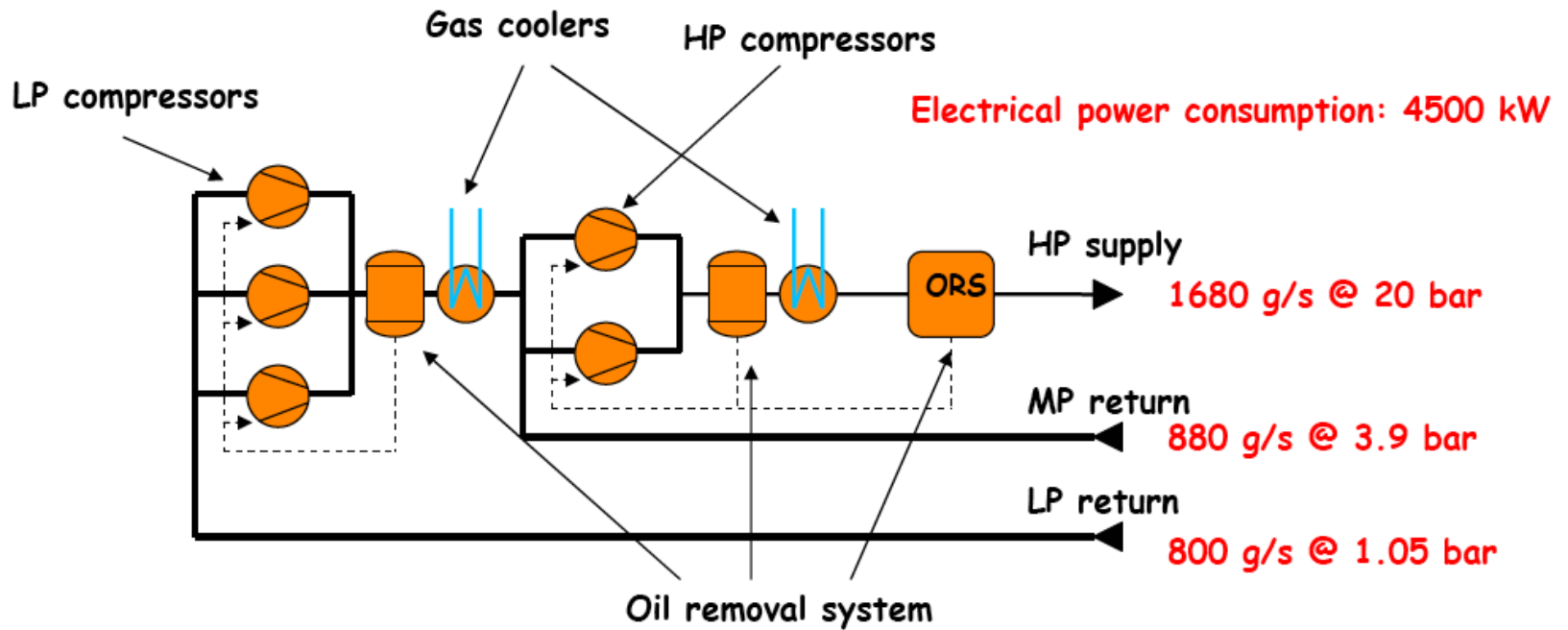


Linde Kryotechnik



Examples of machines : large Helium Refrigeration

Compression unit for a refrigerator 18 kW @ 4,2 K

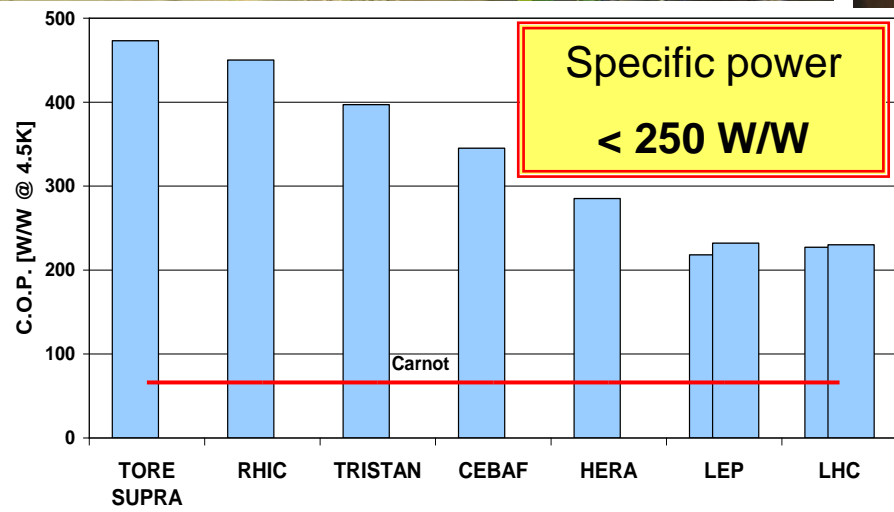
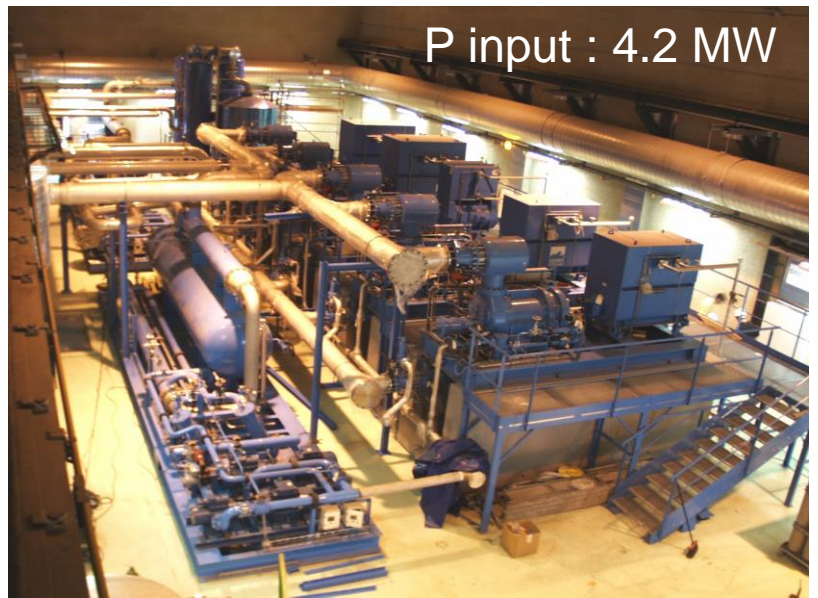




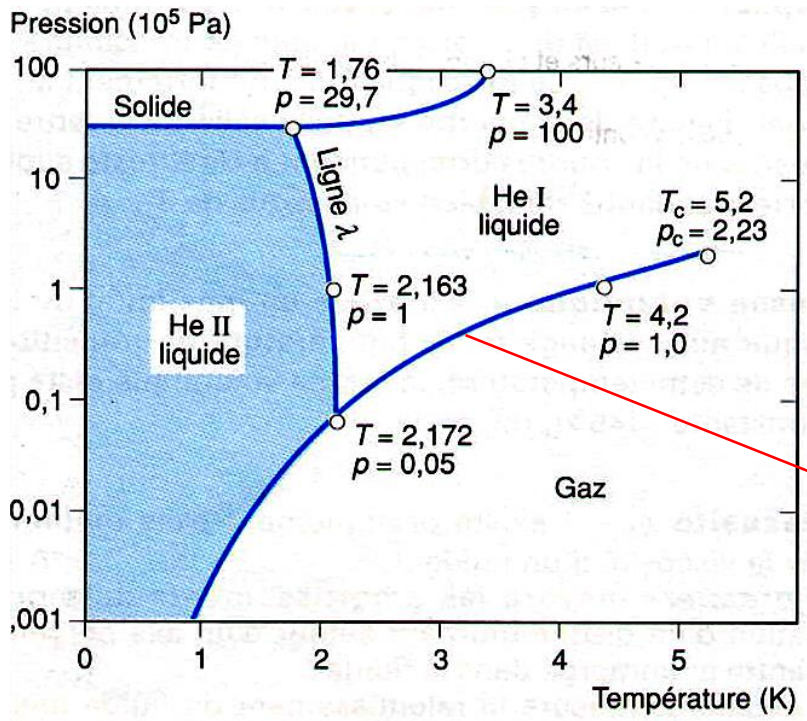
Examples of machines: « large » refrigeration Helium CERN

18 kW @ 4.5 K refrigerators

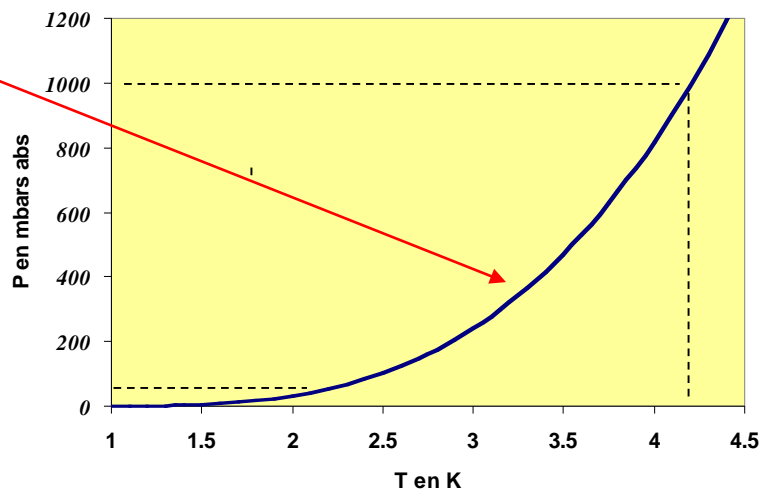
33 kW @ 50 K to 75 K - 23 kW @ 4.6 K to 20 K - 41 g/s liquefaction



Cycles for temperatures below 4,2 K (T_{sat} at 1 atm) (example : superfluid helium at $T < 2,17$ K)



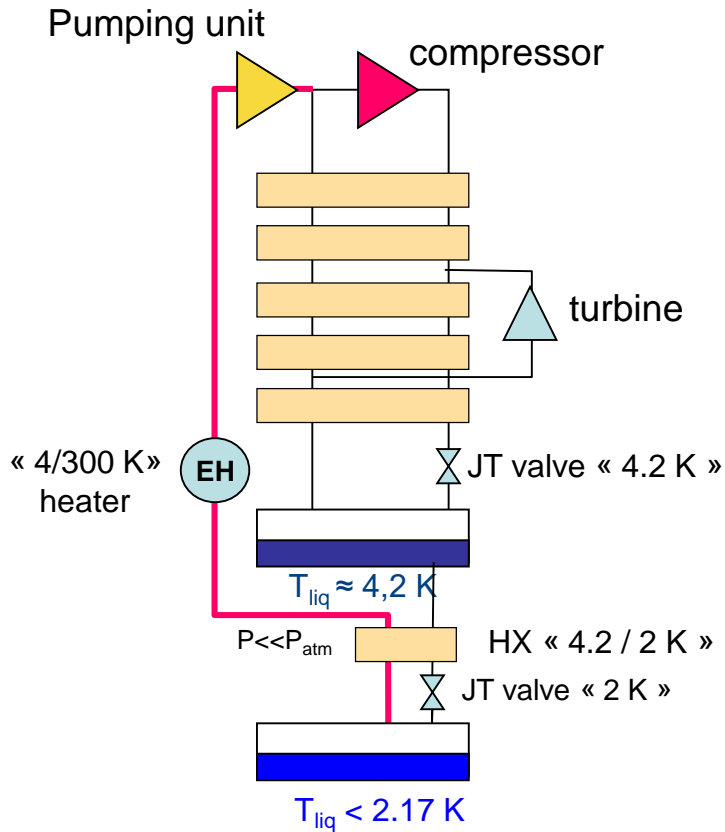
Decreasing the temperature needs to decrease the pressure of a liquid helium bath [vapor saturation curve $T_{sat}=f(P_{sat})$]



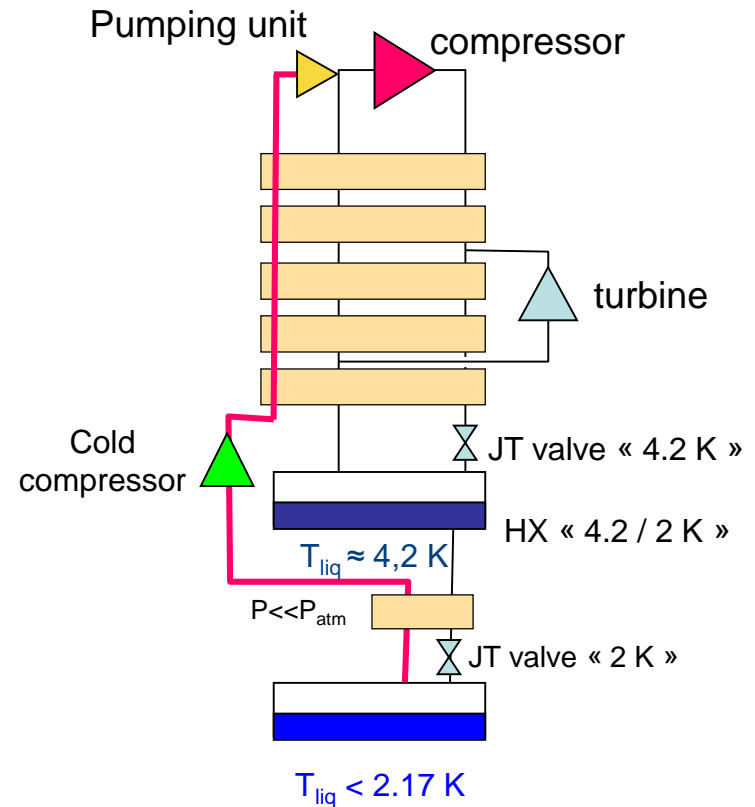
- => Depressurising of circuits under atmospheric pressure !!!
- => Risk of air inlets, contamination =>plugging at low temperature...
- And additionnally, mass flow at low pressure leads to high pressure drop
- => Very large heat exchanger if used at very low pressure

Various possibilities to obtain T below 4.2 K ($T < 2.17$ K \Rightarrow He II)

- Pumping at room temperature
small cold power at $T < 2.17$ K (< 4.5 g/s i.e < 100 W)

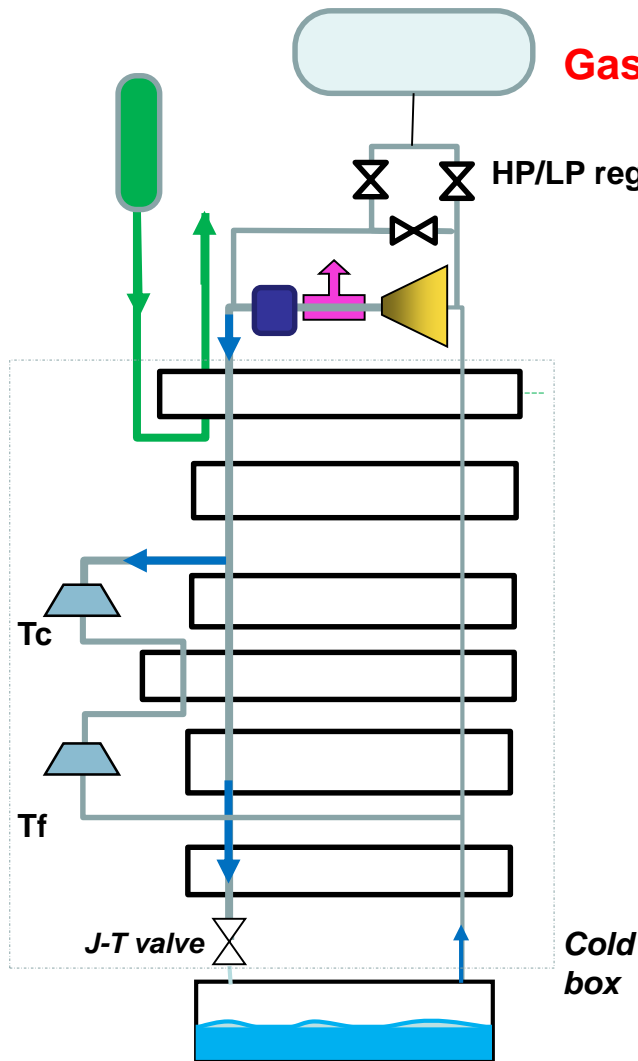


- Cold compressors
large cold power at $T < 2.17$ K (> 4.5 g/s i.e > 100 W) and continuous operation



Typical components for helium refrigeration machines (recuperative cycle)

Gas buffers for pure He storage



« Lungs » of the cryoplant :
Volume to give or recover pure gas for cycle



2 x 100 m³ for a 150 l/h liquefier :
 - Redundancy for maintenance (PED)

He compressor

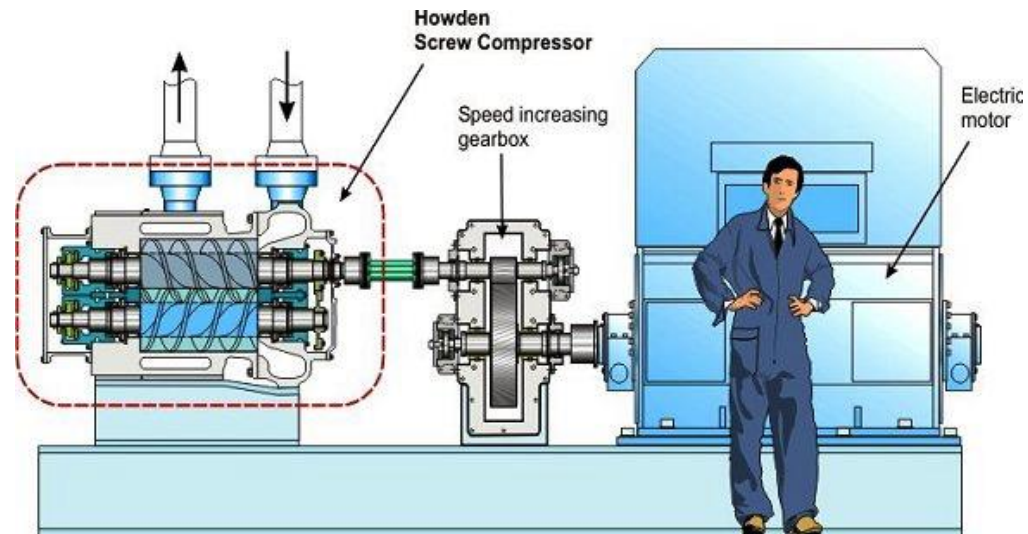
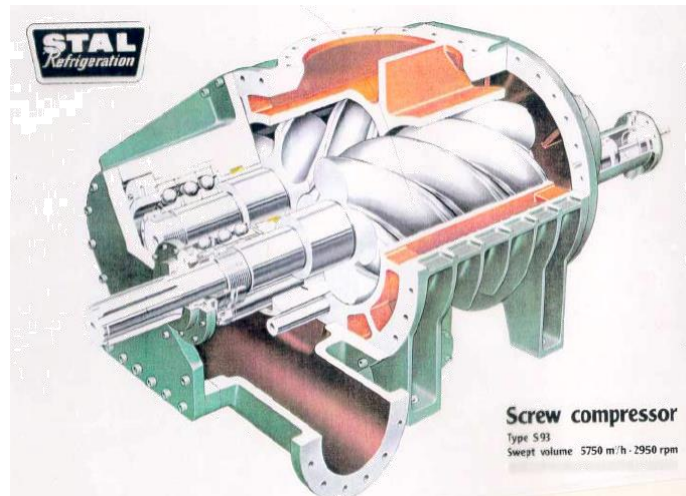
Classically, **screw compressors** for helium cycles

Generally

- multi-staged (2), up to 21 bars, with devices in // above 5000 Nm³/h
- Lubricated screws

=> extraction of heat compression thanks to oil as extra media

=> lubrication !



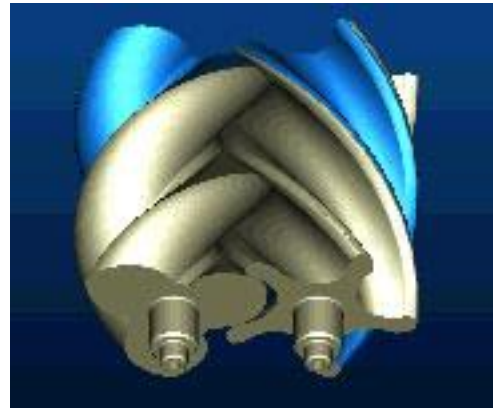
R : High efficiency centrifugal compressors have technical difficulties with He (compression rate and overheating due to helium properties)

screw compression



n-1 lobes
Male screw

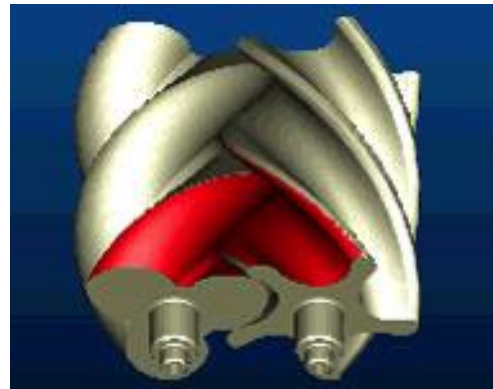
n grooves
Female screw



Suction phase: The gas enters through the suction port into the rotor turns opened on the suction side



Compression phase: the progressive rotation of the rotors causes the gas inlet orifice to close, the volume is reduced and the pressure rises.



Evacuation phase: compression is complete, final pressure is reached and discharge begins..

Examples of He screw compressor

Standard compressor

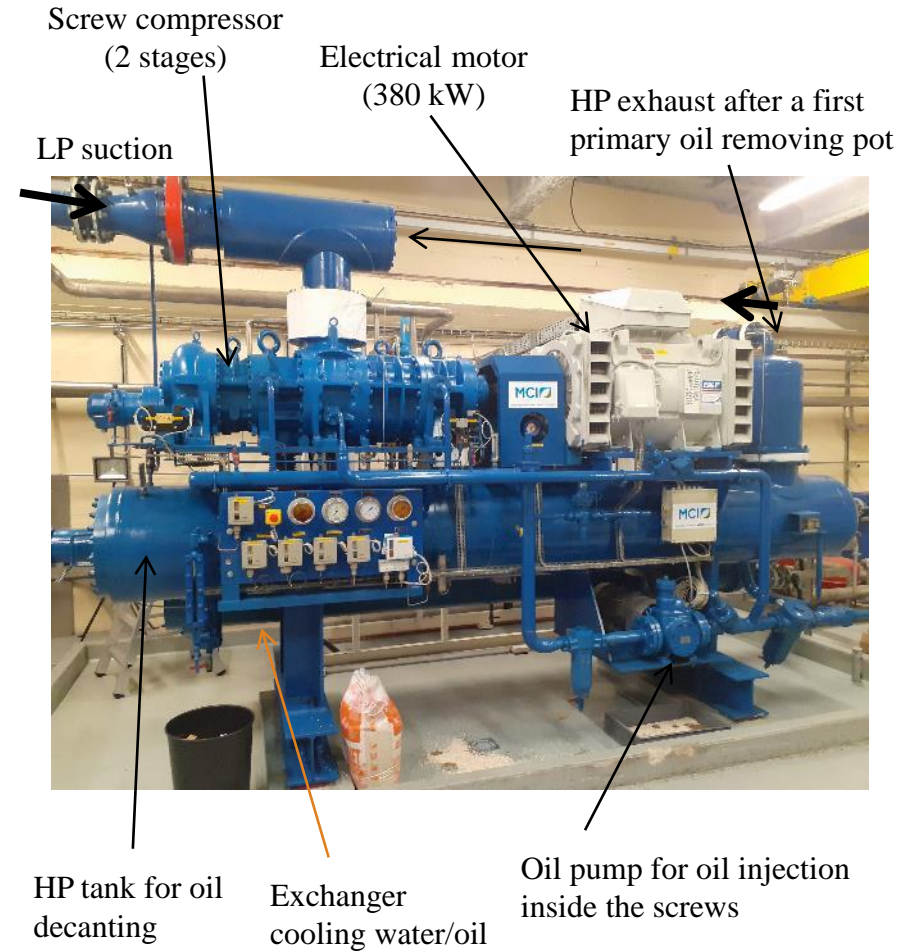
< 100 g/s & 300 kW



He screw compressor KAESER

(15 bars - 80 g/s)

Specific compressor skid



He screw compressor MYCOM

(16 bars - 90 g/s)

Compressors, oil and ORS (oil removal skid)

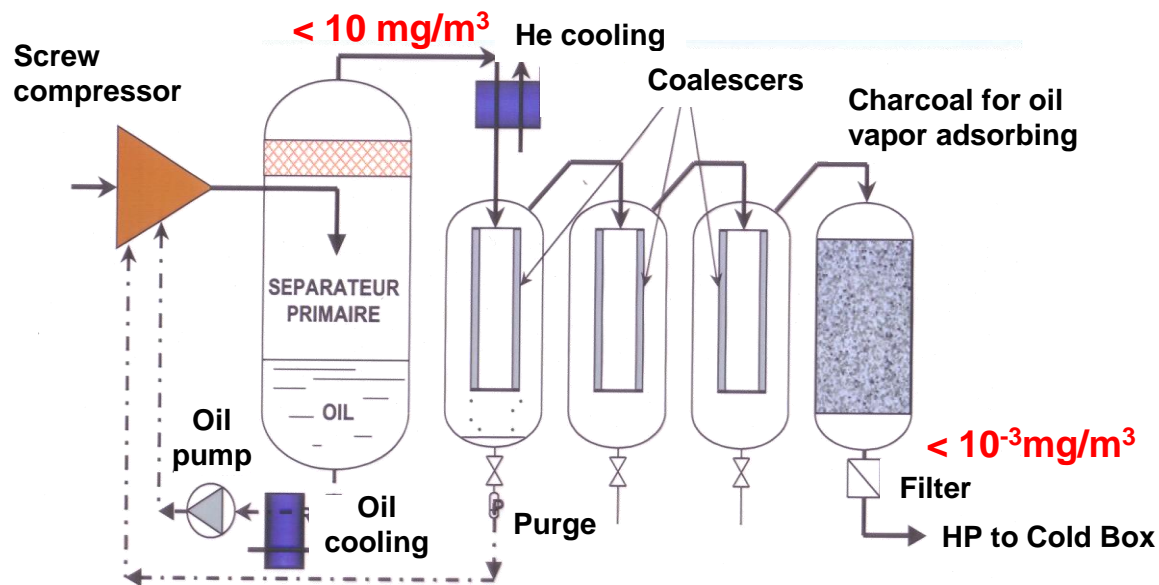
Need of oil for cooling the compression

R : Adiabatic compression from 1,05 to 15 bars ($T_{init}=300\text{ K}$) $\frac{T_{hp}}{T_{bp}} = \left(\frac{P_{hp}}{P_{bp}}\right)^{\frac{g-1}{g}} \Rightarrow T_{hp} \approx 870\text{ K} \quad (597^\circ\text{C!!!})$

Injection of oil with helium will absorb a large quantity of compression heat (pulverisated oil in order to have a large exchange surface).

Typically, **1 g/s of compressed He** needs to be mixed with **35 g/s** of oil for an efficient cooling

An Oil removal system is mandatory for supplying the cold box with pure HP gas



ORS (oil removal skid)

HP from compressor

Final activated charcoal pot

Cooling heat exchanger He/water

Filter against charcoal dust

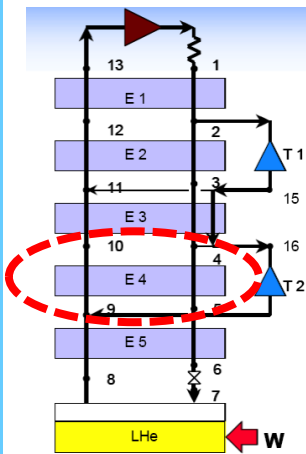


HP to Cold Box

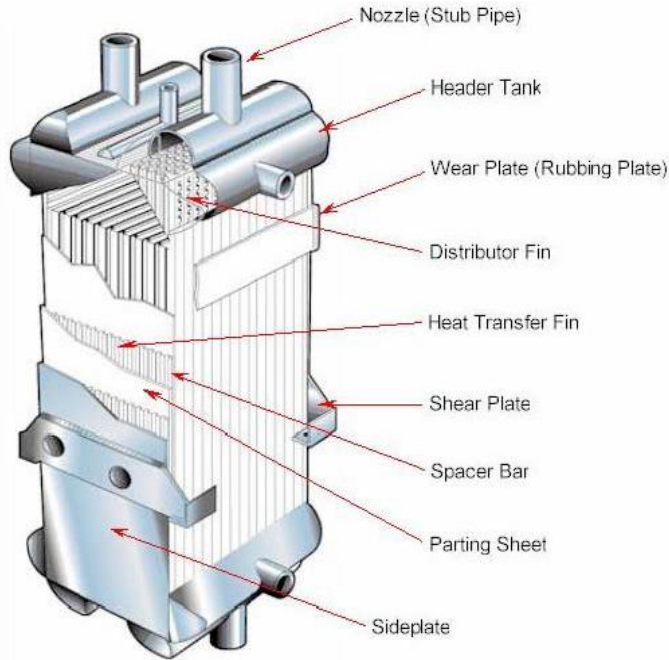
2 or 3 coalescing pots

Primary separation

Cold box internal components



HX battery made of several plate heat exchanger (Al brazed)



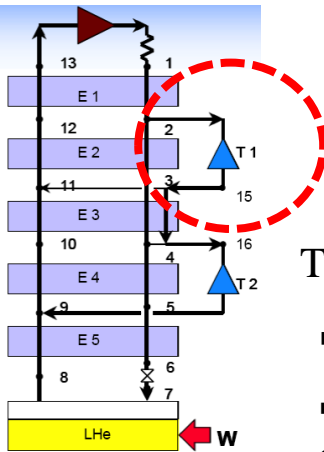
High compacity : 850 à 1500 m²/m³



« 25 kW @4.5 K » ITER cold box

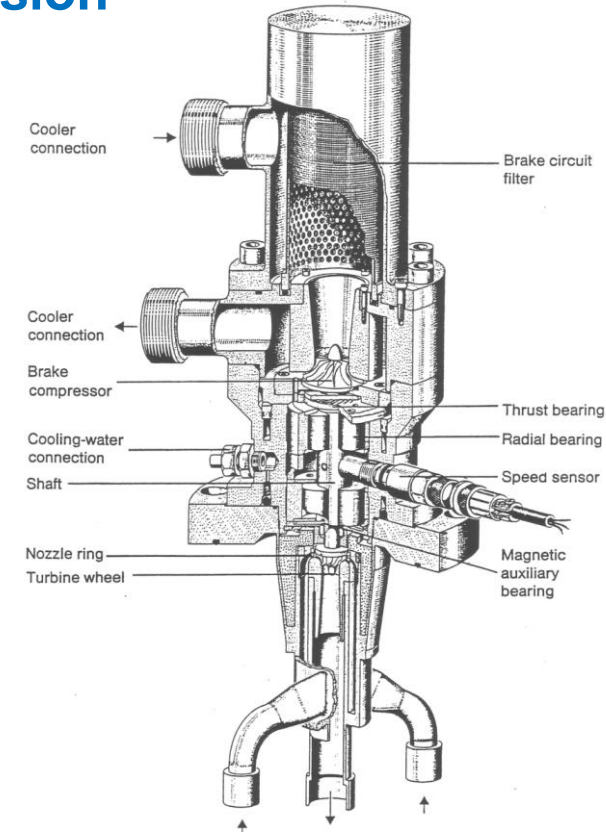
Cold box internal components

Turbo-expanders : « turbine » for quasi-isentropic expansion

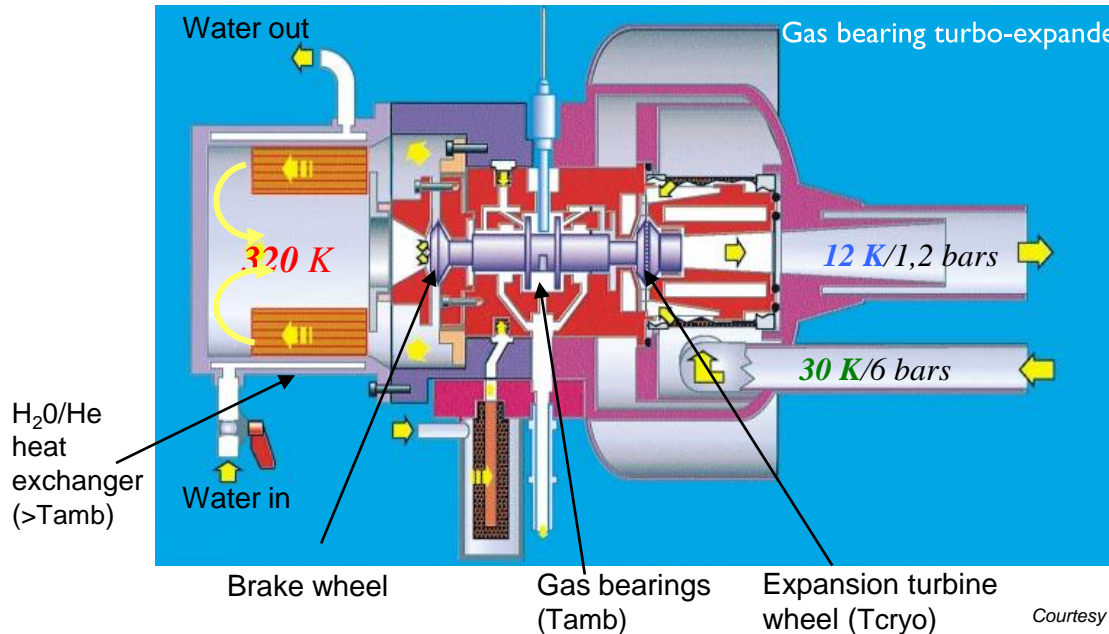


Turbo-expanders :

- **high rotation speed** (up to 4000 tr/s)
- **gas bearings** with very small fonctionnal gaps (a few μm) for a high efficiency ($\eta \approx 0,7$)
- large difference of temperature between expansion wheel and brake wheel ($> 250 \text{ K}$)
- expansion rate : 6 à 10
- MTBF $> 100\ 000 \text{ h}$



Exploded view of He refrigerator turbo expander(origin SULZER/LINDE)



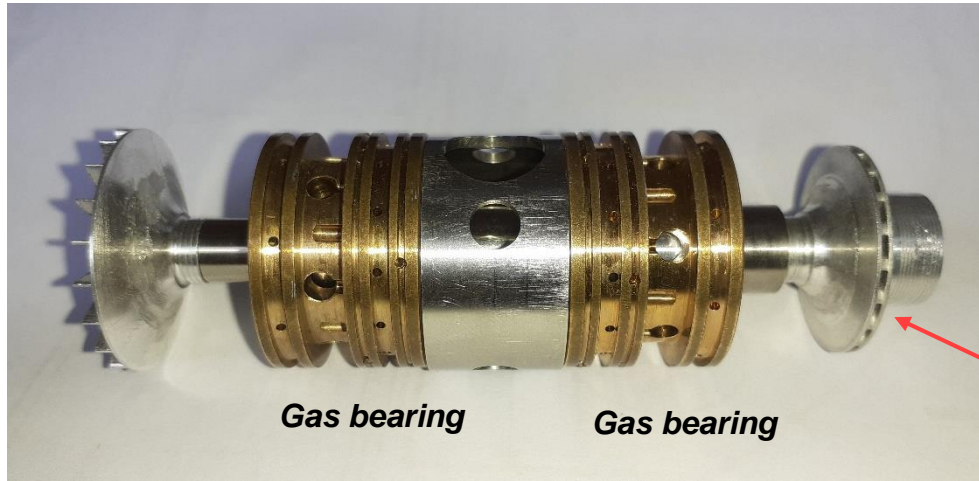
Turbine wheel

Courtesy : Air liquide

Cold box internal components

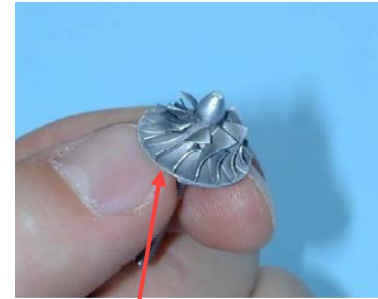
Example of turbo-expander

Brake wheel



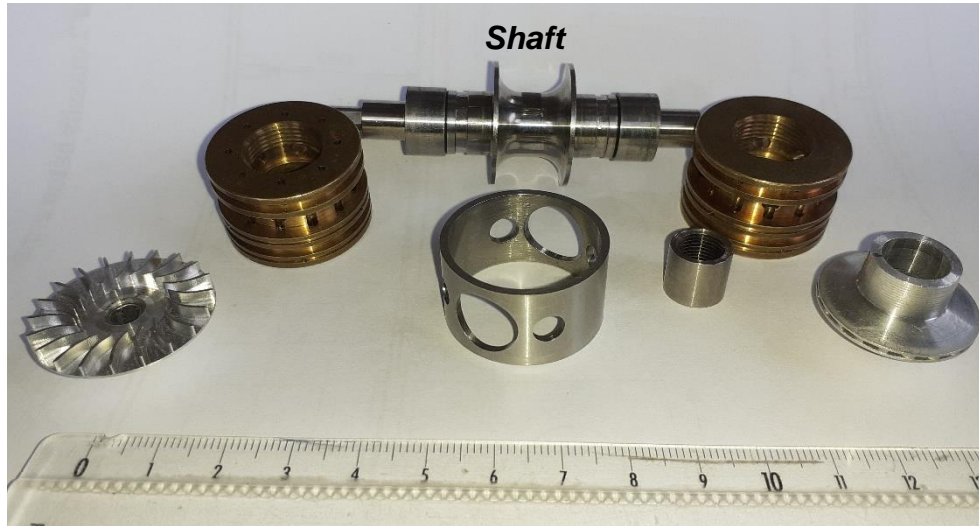
Gas bearing

Gas bearing



Turbine wheel:

- Open type
- closed type



Shaft

Complementary equipment for cycles at $T < 4,2 \text{ K}$: cold compressors

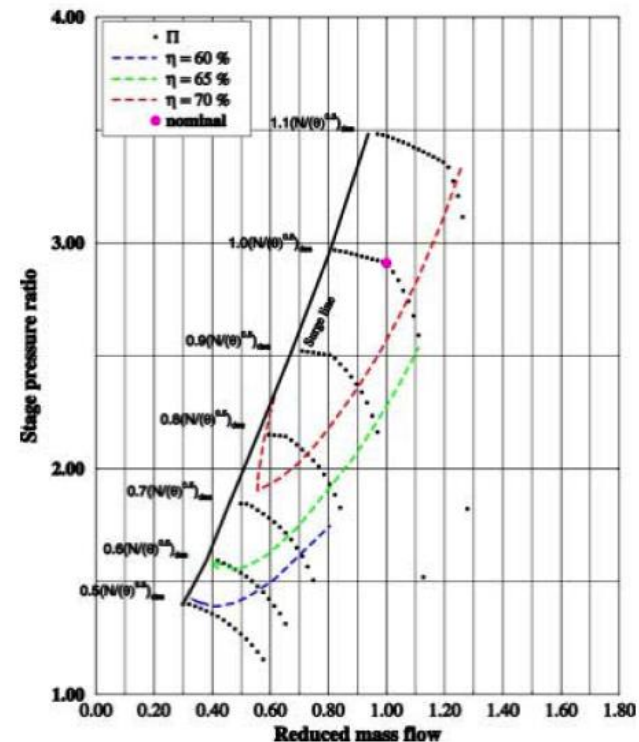
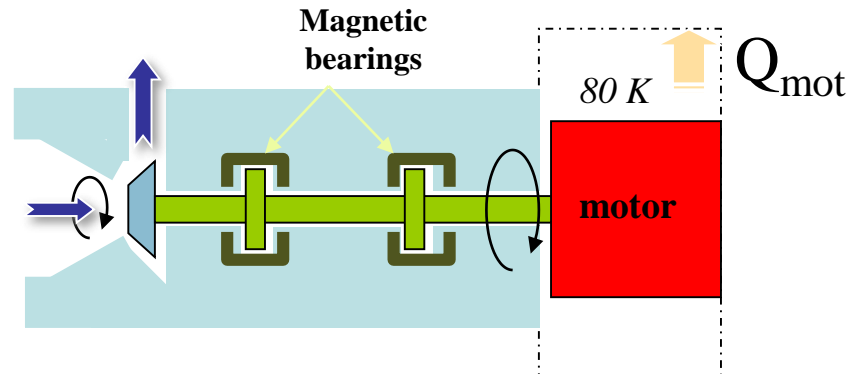
They allow compression of cold gas below P_{atm} . Same general conception than a turboexpander but with classically magnetic bearings and a ratio of compression in He around a factor 3. To reduce heat leaks, motor can operate at LN_2 temperatures..

Compression field limited (see example on curve)

$$\eta \approx 0,7$$

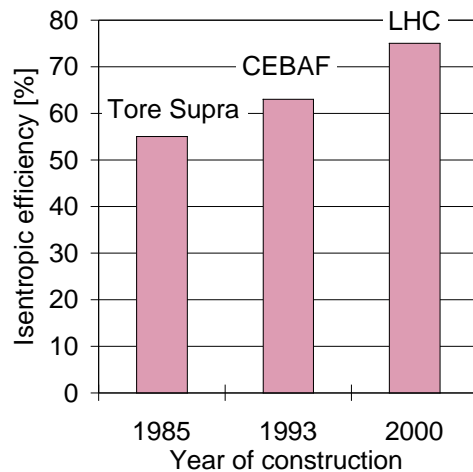
$$\text{Compression ratio} \approx 3$$

Installation in serial is possible taking care about speed regulation of each compressor.



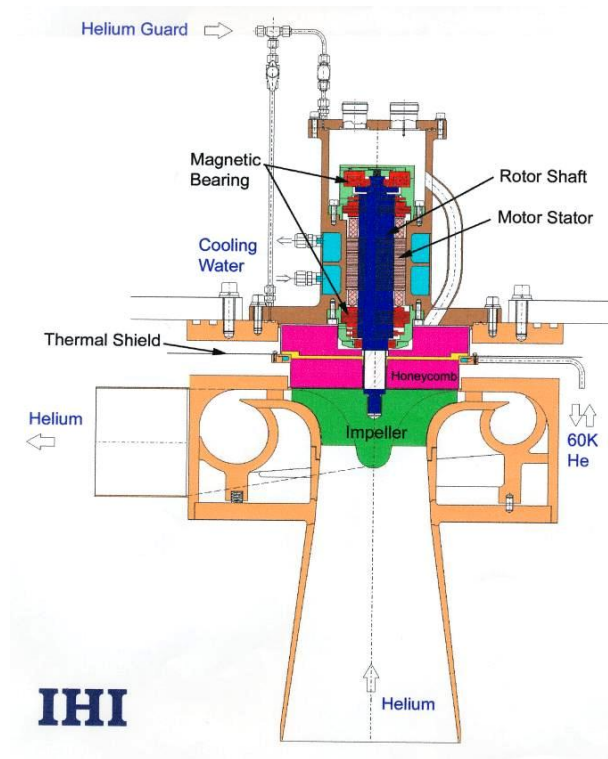
Complementary equipment for cycles at $T < 4,2$ K : cold compressors

- High isentropic efficiency
- High reliability
- Easy handling and maintenance

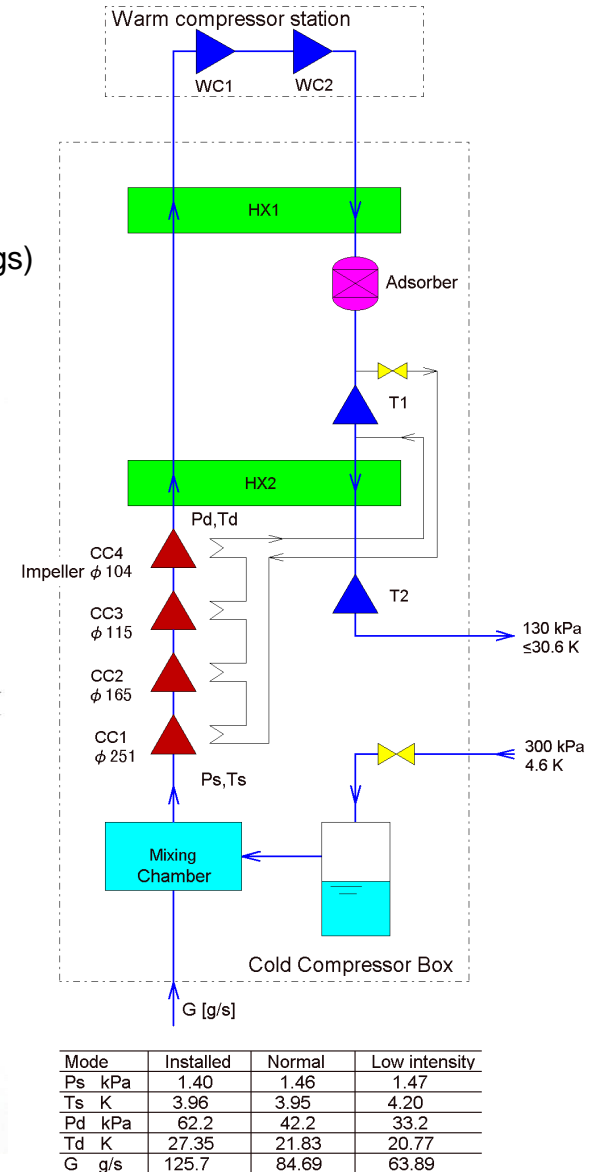


Technical challenges:

- 3D wheel and low heat leaks
- no lubricant (magnetic bearings)
- “Cartridge” design



IHI



LHC :Refrigeration unit 1.8K

Refrigerator or liquefier

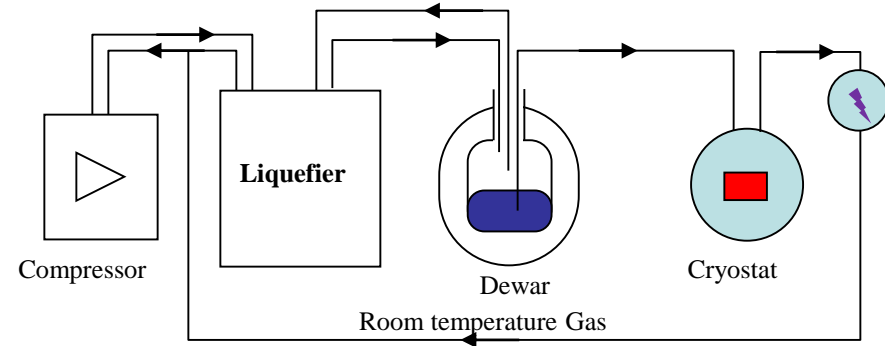
Liquefier mode

Capacity in l/h (or g/s)

Independance of equipment

Low efficiency

Large turbo-expanders



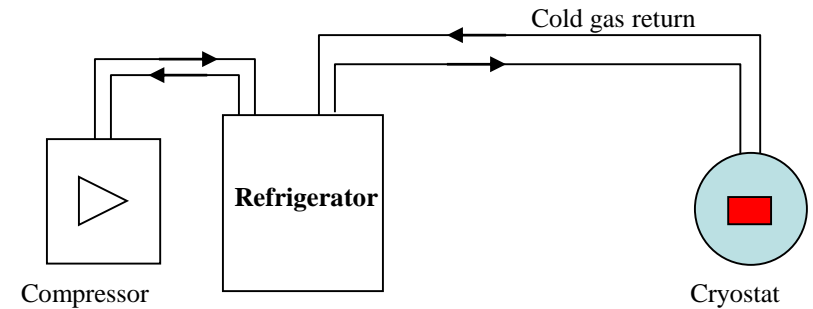
Refrigerator mode

Capacity in « W at 4 K »

Better efficiency

Equipment strongly interacting

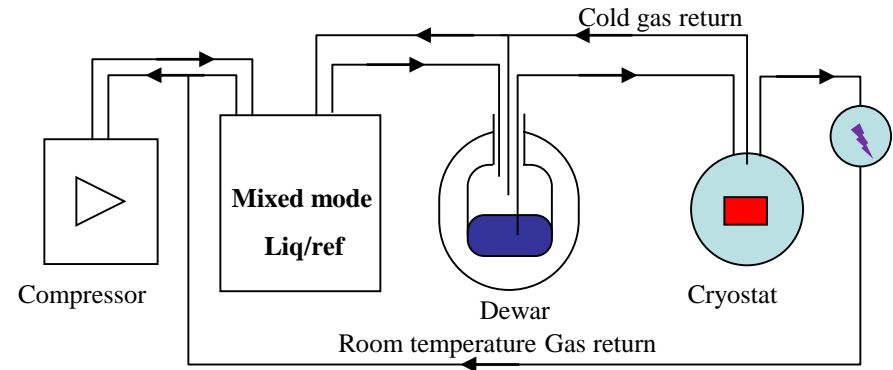
Large heat exchanger



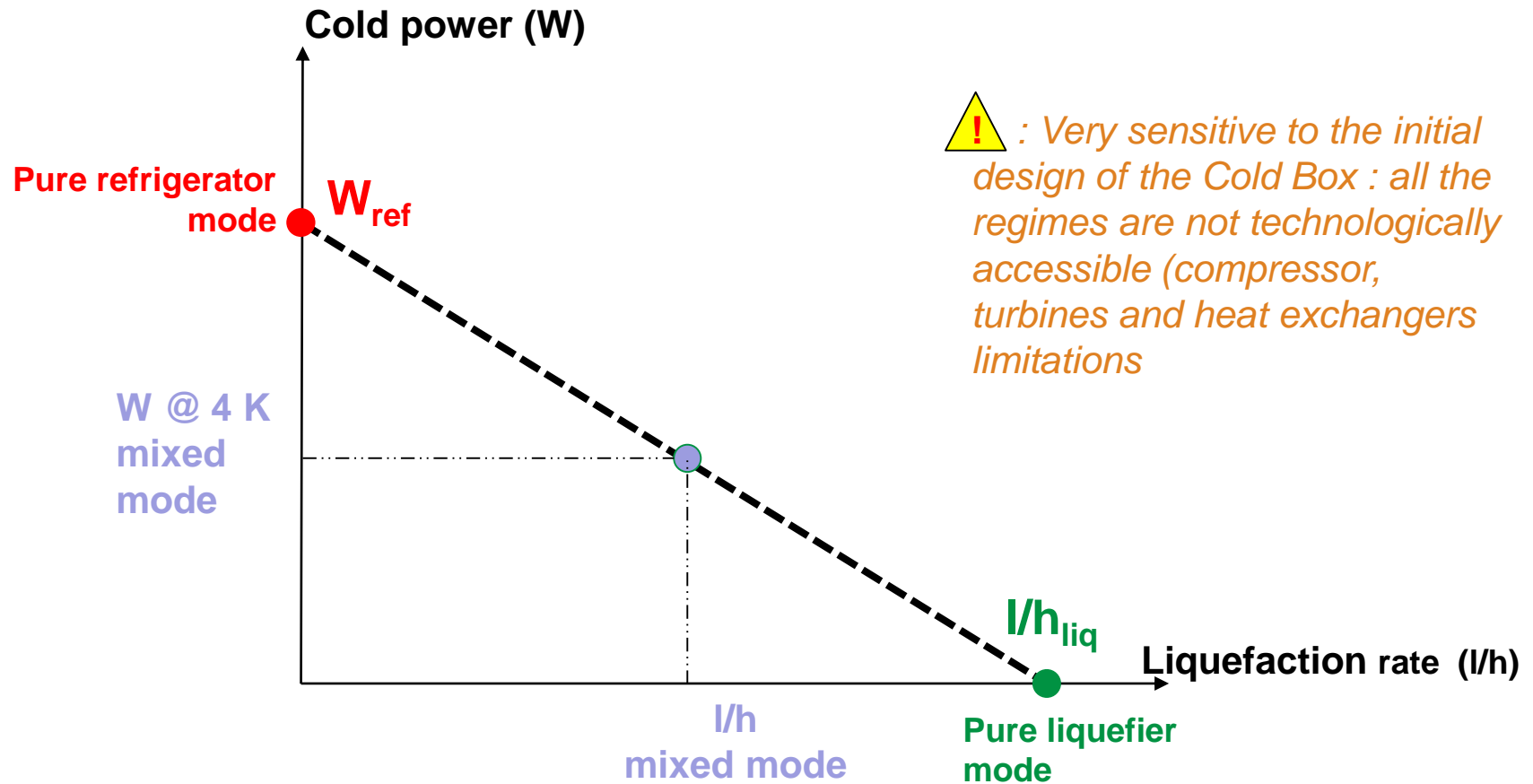
Mixed mode

W at 4 K + l/h (or g/s)

Adaptative

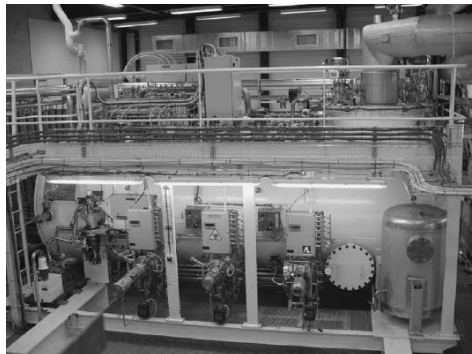


Approximative estimation in mixed mode

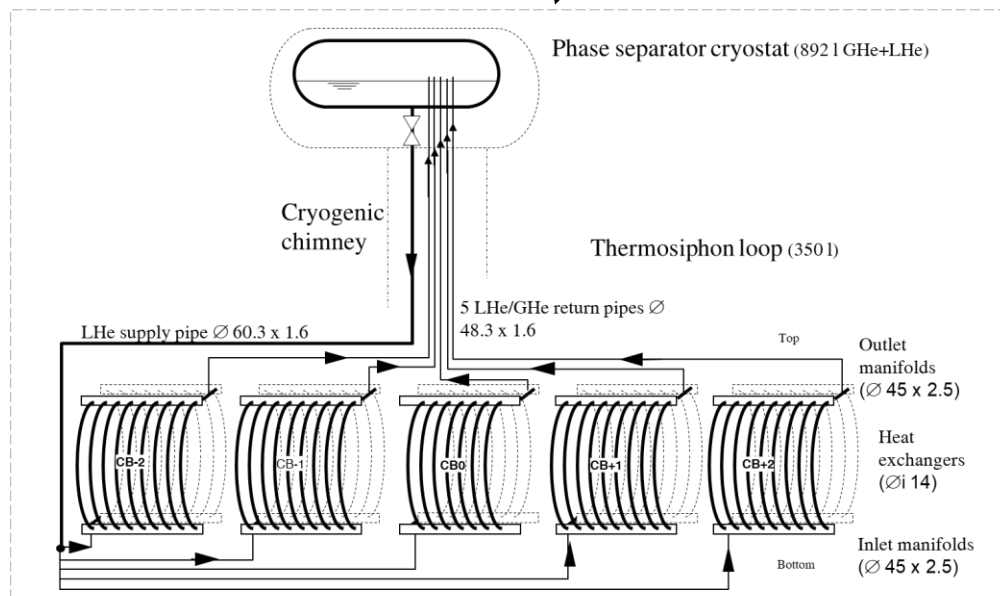
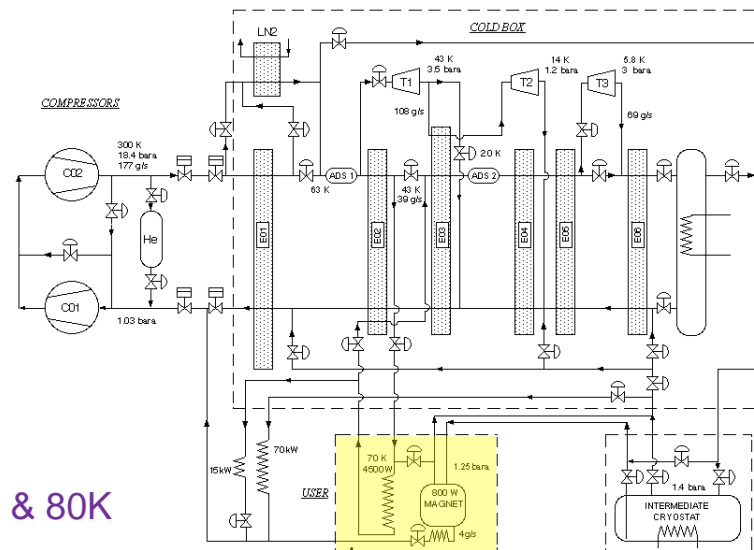


Example: CMS refrigerator (mixed mode) and its magnet

CMS cold box



- 225 tons at 4.5 K to be cooled in 3 weeks
- Refrigeration part 170/400 W at 4.5 K
- Liquefaction part 2.5 g/s
- Thermal shielding 3000 W between 60 & 80K



Example: CMS refrigerator (mixed mode) and its magnet

then

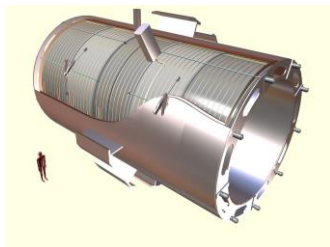
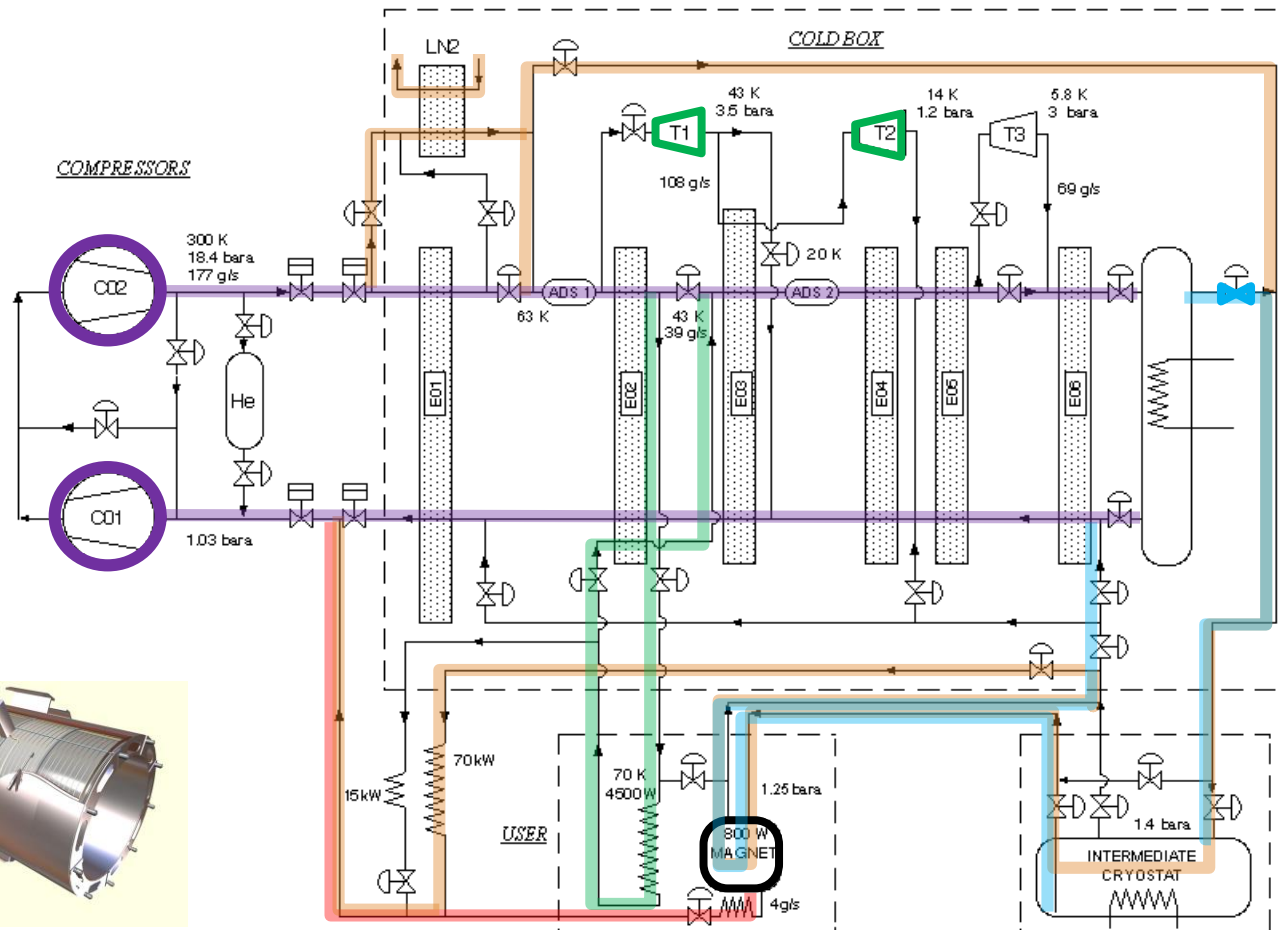
simultaneously

150 g/s between 300 K and 80 K for magnet pre-cooling (225 t)

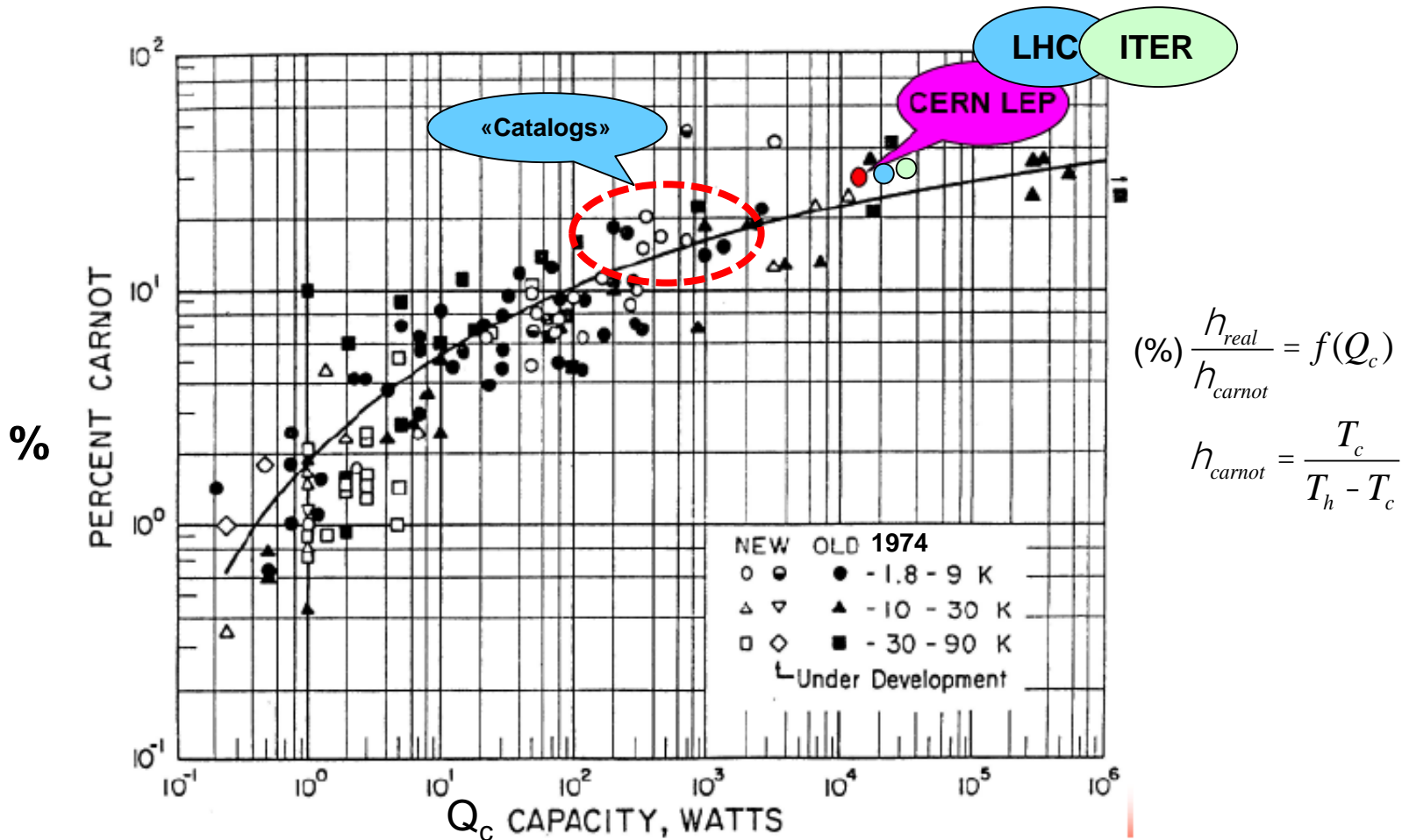
4500 W (max) between 60 K & 80 K for magnet thermal shielding

800 W (max) at 4.45 K for Sc magnet cooling

4 g/s liquefaction for current leads (2 x 20 kA)



Strobridge Diagram



High power users are well served !
 Large capacity machines have the best efficiency .

ex: Ideal Carnot at 4 K = 70 W_{cold}/W_{cons} but really

- **LHC** : 240 W_{cold}/W_{cons} => < 30 % Carnot
- **Commercial** : 500 to 750 W_{cold}/W_{cons} => < 15 % Carnot
- **4 K G-M cryocooler** : 1.8W_{cold}/7200W_{elec} => < 2% Carnot

Summary

For large cooling power, possibly down to 1.8 K, recuperative machines based on the Claude cycle are used, integrating :

Oil lubricated screw compressor

Oil removal system

Several turboexpanders

Battery of counterflow exchangers

JT valve

Possibly 2 K stage with pumping units and/or cold compressors

- Commercial standard helium :
 - liquefiers available from 15 l/h to 600 l/h
 - refrigerators available from 100 W to 1000 W @ 4.5K
- Customized plants for helium liquefiers larger than 650 l/h and refrigerators larger than 1000 W @ 4.5K (ex : up to 25 kW (ITER) or 8000 l/h (Qatar plant))
- Experiments below 2.2 K can use cold compressor technology above 100 W of power.

Only a few european manufacturers (above a few tenths l/h) :

- *Air Liquid Advanced Technology*
- *Linde Kryotechnik AG*
- *Vorbuchner GmbH & Co(< 50 l/h)*

*R : For small cooling capacities (a few W at 4 K or a very few l/h of LHe), another concept exists to avoid LHe purchase: using a **cryocooler**. This is another story...*

Thank you for your attention.